

Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet

Performance . Educational Excellence . Artistic Achievement

*Fort
Wayne
Ballet*



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www.fortwayneballet.org



Philosophy

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The Academy starts in the heart of a child. It begins with a boy or girl who just can't stop moving or spinning in circles in the family room. Dance becomes the activity parents put them in to direct all that movement. It continues as the child continuously pushes himself to keep his leg straight and body aligned. It jumps forward the first time a young person feels the smoothness of her first pair of pointe shoes. It culminates in a student who spends up to 20 hours a week in the studio - who strives everyday for the balance between strength and grace with taciturn determination and commitment in order to reach his or her goals and dreams.

The Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet's goal is to provide students a firm foundation of quality dance regardless of their aspirations for dance in their future. Students range from young children exploring movement to pre-professional students looking to dance as their career. We also have adult students and many who do not choose a vocational education, but take ballet because of their love of this artistic experience. A safe yet aggressive syllabus, created with the physical, cognitive, and social development of children at its heart, guides educational efforts.

Facility

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Fort Wayne Ballet is located at 324 Penn Avenue, 3/4 of a mile south of Glenbrook Square in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Our building is used exclusively for the purpose of dance training. It features large mirrored dance studios with observation windows, spacious dressing rooms, and showers for males and females, air conditioning and ceiling fans for comfortable air movement, special "sprung" dance floors with a "marley" surface (important for injury prevention). Families can check out dance videos and DVD's from the

Resource Center. Many students also use the Resource Center as a quiet place to do homework between classes. Parents can wait in the Parent Lounge while children attend classes.

Live Accompaniment

Academy classes offer students the ability to dance to live accompaniment during their class work. This element is rare at the regional level, yet we know students benefit by learning how to dance to varying music syntax and rhythms and not just pre-recorded music.

Class Sizes

We believe it is important for the student to teacher ratio to be small. More individual attention to student needs translates into safer and better dance training. Pre-Ballet classes are naturally smaller than the more graded levels, however we limit class size to ensure necessary attention to detail and development.





Curriculum

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Fort Wayne Ballet provides a healthy atmosphere in which children and adults can develop not only strong dance technique, but also a strong body, poise, confidence, musicality, creativity, and artistry.

In the same way music is taught as a graded curriculum, where a student learns rudiments which build upon themselves over time, we view dance education as a technique. As such, the Academy program is built on the foundation of a specific curriculum where the elements of dance technique are taught in a way which lays a strong foundation with refinement of the movement. Students as young as four years of age are learning concepts which will carry them through the entire educational process. Beginning ballet students learn movements even the most advanced student utilizes, just with more refinement and in combination with other elements.

Pre-Ballet

Four through Six Years

Formal ballet does not begin within the Academy until children are 7 or 8 years old. Before this time, often children's bones and joints are too soft for the rigors of ballet training. In addition, their attention spans and cognitive capabilities might inhibit them from finding the joy ballet can bring. Our 4-6 year olds enroll in the Pre-Ballet Division, a graduated creative movement program. Creative movement combines skill development and self-expression. We believe in teaching children dance concepts and elements verses just learning a teacher's "steps."

Creative movement allows children to gain an understanding of dance history and different cultures, while increasing their listening skills. It expands children's creative skills and increases their self-esteem through self-expression. Children learn body awareness, control, balance, and coordination. They will also gain physical strength, flexibility, stamina, and agility as they progress from Fun N Dance to the Creative Dance II. They will take the concepts learned, like space, time, force, body movement, and form with them through their final year of Performance Level. The primary goal is to instill a love of dance they will take with them throughout their lives.

Curricular Ballet

Seven and Above

Ballet begins with Ballet 1A for our 7 year olds. Each year of study, new technical material is added to the curriculum. In this way, levels become technically more demanding and artistic development is nurtured. The curriculum is paced so that in each level as students gain new material they are developing the muscular foundation to support themselves on pointe as well as arrive to the introductory pointe level at the appropriate age. Special for male dancers; No pointe for men however men's classes are added to a male student's curriculum as he progresses.

The recommended number of ballet technique classes is indicated by the level NUMBER. Students in Ballet 2A are recommended to take two ballet classes per week, whereas students in Ballet 4 are recommended to take four classes per week. These recommendations are based on what will GENERALLY be enough classes for the student to master the material in one Academic Year. However, know that promotion is based on students' safety and ability.





Classes Offered

Ballet Technique

These classes are offered at a variety of levels to best meet the needs of the growing skills of the student. Each student is placed in a class or classes according to his or her level of advancement. Pointe classes, men's classes or pas de deux classes are added as the student's technical background and strength develops.

Pointe

Introductory Pointe begins approximately in Ballet 3B when students are generally 11-13 years old. Students spend the first semester building key muscles and mastering new movements. Pointe readiness is not just about foot maturity and growth plates closing, it's about foot and leg muscles taking pressure off each joint as they "pull up" their feet onto pointe. In addition, abdominal/core body strength is essential as well as students' ability to maintain proper alignment; almost as second nature.

Teen and Adult Ballet

The goal of the adult program is to expose adults to ballet and or jazz as an art form while learning control and toning of the body. Fort Wayne Ballet offers classes for the adult with no previous experience as well as for the advanced adult student.

Contemporary

A true blend of dance forms, this movement often stressed the expression of emotional intensity and contemporary subjects rather than focusing on the formal, classical, and often narrative aspects of ballet. Incorporating contemporary techniques into the curriculum of more mature dancers offers a flexibility of talents and allows them to excel in today's original choreographies.

Men's Classes

There are many unique movements men perform in dance. Jumps are important to men and women, however, men work on their elevation more in this class. Turns are also an important focus, along with turning steps en L'Air (in the air). Much strength and athleticism is required for today's male dancers, making this class an invaluable addition to a male's training.

Pas de Deux

The term Pas de Deux, French for "Step of Two", is used to describe the beautifully luxurious and floating movements performed between a man and woman in ballet. The movements are designed to showcase the man's strength and the woman's adagio and line of the movement. By dancing with a partner a female dancer can take positions she would never be able to on her own. The classes for Pas de Deux are by selection from the advanced levels.

Jazz

For students at the recommended level, a truly American form of dance is offered. This class helps a student increase flexibility and self confidence while exploring a different movement form.

Tap

An offspring of the old vaudeville era, tap is enjoying a resurgence in American theater. It is an important part of a dancer's training for versatility and teaching control of ankles and feet, essential for batterie'.



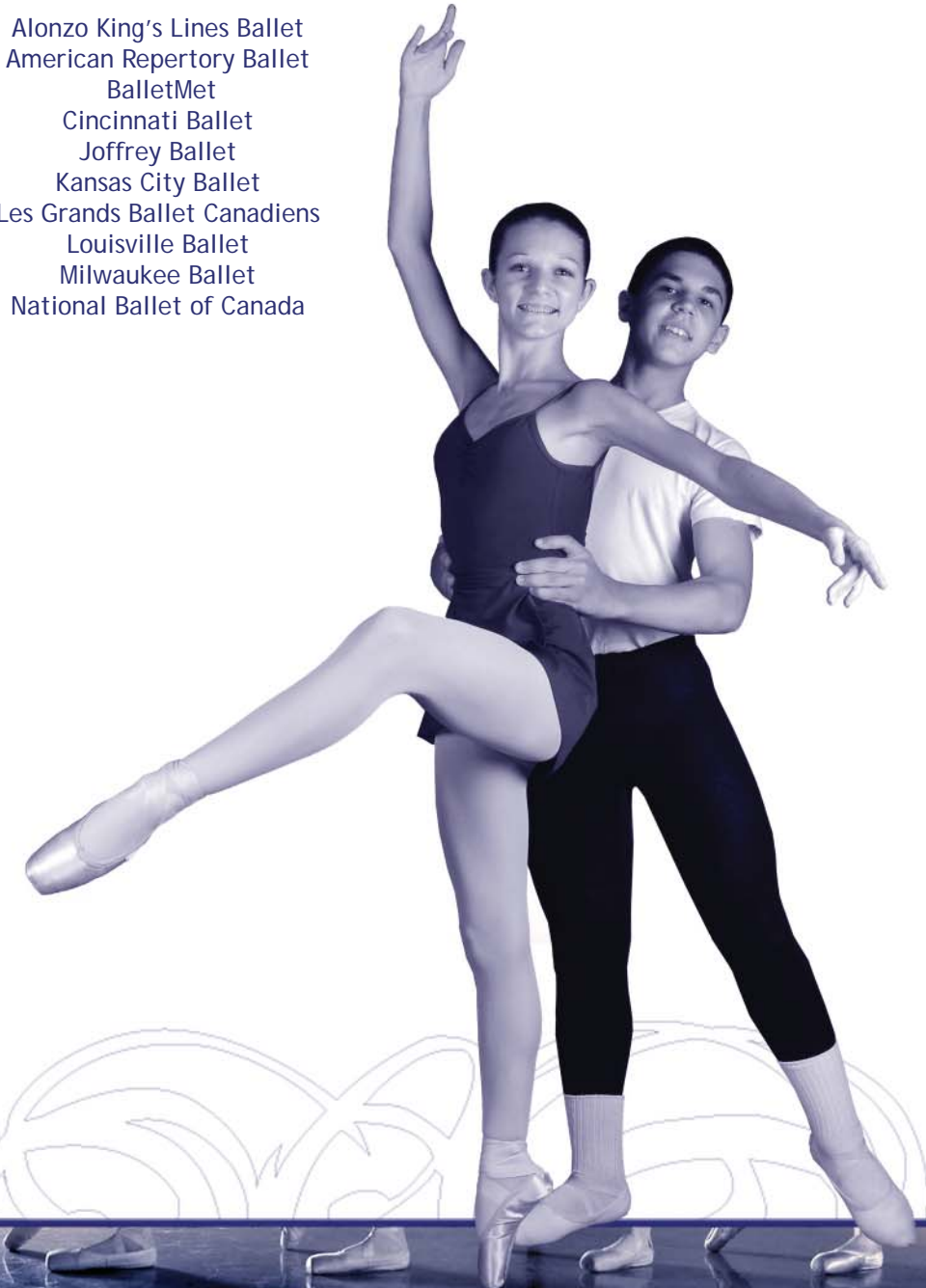
Conservatory

Conservatory Program

As students progress in their dance education, many often want to explore the possibility of dedicating themselves to a life of dance. The Academy is fortunate to be large enough to offer students a choice about what place dance has in their life. For those choosing to enter the vocational track of pre-professional training, the acceleration of educational requirements is the first step towards the increased performance privileges. Each year students from around the country audition for placement in the program, allowing both the exhibition of individual growth, and the entrance of new students who are transferring into the program. Those transferring at non-audition times may audition individually.

Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet alumni have gone on to dance professionally with many recognized companies, including;

Alonzo King's Lines Ballet
American Repertory Ballet
BalletMet
Cincinnati Ballet
Joffrey Ballet
Kansas City Ballet
Les Grands Ballet Canadiens
Louisville Ballet
Milwaukee Ballet
National Ballet of Canada





Performing Levels

Youth Company (YC)

While technically not part of the Conservatory Program, Youth Company is our youngest performing level. Students are typically in Ballet 4 level. These students take 3-4 ballet technique classes, 1-2 alternative dance classes (such as tap or character), 1 Youth Company ballet class to rehearse the repertoire set during Youth Company summer camp, and 1 Academic class. They perform throughout the year at various festivals or community events. These students are automatically cast in *The Nutcracker* and do not have to audition. They may have more than one role or be in both casts. The spring performance may utilize YC members, depending on the production. These students spend 9.5- 11.5 hours/ week in dance classes, with rehearsal or performance times. In addition they possess the maturity to manage their time well, take responsibility of informing themselves of rehearsal times, and obtain a healthy academic standing.

Performing Levels 1 & 2 (PL 1&2)

These students typically work at Ballet 5/6 level, however, the expectation of technique mastery and ability to bring artistry to technique is much higher. These students comprise corps de ballet, demi-soloists, and some solo roles in each performance, augmenting the professional dancers who typically carry lead roles. Their load is even heavier than that for YC. These students take ballet classes 6 days a week, totaling 13-15 hours of class per week before rehearsal times. As they progress through the Performance Season, their class schedule is adjusted for rehearsals, visiting Master Teachers, auditions to Summer Programs. PL 1&2 students must attend an approved Summer Intensive study program, whether it is at Fort Wayne Ballet or elsewhere.

Fort Wayne Ballet Trainee Program

The Fort Wayne Ballet Conservatory Program was created with a mission to give students the opportunity to develop in a nurturing environment that will groom them to become professional dancers. Trainees have achieved an advanced level of classical ballet, but seek additional training before auditioning for a professional company. Fort Wayne Ballet's Trainee program is a two-year, full time, 54 credit program leading to a Fort Wayne Ballet Certificate of Dance. Trainees have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, and go through a separate application and audition process. The Certificate indicates completion of in-depth studies at professional standards. Along with daily technique classes in Classical Ballet, Trainees study Pointe, Pas De Deux, Contemporary Dance, Jazz, Tap, Character, Repertoire, Dance History and Theory, Pedagogy, Anatomy, Choreography and Terminology. A Trainee's experience culminates in a final project, which is a performance or research based project representative of the student's interest, talents, and cumulative experience in dance. Projects are selected and prepared under the supervision of a dance faculty member.



