

*Ballet Theatre*  
*of*  
**Washington**

***DANCER HANDBOOK***

*(As of June 2019 & Subject to change)*

## WELCOME & TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome (or welcome back) to Ballet Theatre of Washington! This Handbook was designed specifically for **you**, to address items that affect and contribute to your unique role as a BTW Company Member. It is our hope that the Handbook and the information contained herein are helpful as you navigate the coming season, BTW's facilities, and our policies.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate individual. If you are unsure of who to address, the Artistic Directors serves as the primary contact for BTW Company Members -- please feel free to contact Nancy Gunter during Business Hours.

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Ballet Theatre of Washington founded in 2014 is a not-for-profit organization located in Centralia, Washington. For more information about the company visit, [www.balletwashington.org](http://www.balletwashington.org).

*Enriching lives in the community by bringing dance to all and epitomizes excellence in the performing arts.*

Through the organization's Mission, BTW aims to:

Cultivate an appreciation for the artistry and athleticism of ballet by staging affordable, full-scale productions for the Centralia-Chehalis area and surrounding rural communities. Ballet Theatre of Washington strives to provide opportunities for local dancers to extend their training beyond the classroom setting through experiences that will challenge and stretch them as performers and provide a glimpse of the world of professional ballet.

Ballet Theatre of Washington is committed to racial and gender equality, diversity, and inclusion through hiring practices, organizational program planning, and artistic choices.

Ballet Theatre of Washington offers vital outreach programs throughout the season, many of which involve Company Members. Company Members are cast in productions, workshops and fundraising events as part of the regular repertory season.

## G E N E R A L I N F O R M A T I O N

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<b>ADDRESS:</b>	<b>413 N Tower Ave. P.O Box 903 Centralia, WA 98531</b>
<b>CONTACT:</b>	<b>Tel: 360.623.9010</b> <b>Ticket Purchases: Brown Paper Tickets</b> <b>Online: <a href="http://www.brownpapertickets.com">www.brownpapertickets.com</a></b>  <b>Telephone: 1-800-838-3006</b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:info@balletwashington.org">info@balletwashington.org</a></b>
<b>WEBSITES: BTW</b>	<b><a href="http://www.balletwashington.org">www.balletwashington.org</a></b>
<b>FACEBOOK</b>	<b><a href="http://www.balletwashington.org/home.html">http://www.balletwashington.org/home.html</a></b>
<b>BUSINESS HOURS:</b>	<b>Monday - Friday: 3:30 pm – 8:00 pm Saturday: 9:30 am – 2:00 pm</b> <u><b>Please Note: These hours are subject to change based on class scheduling.</b></u>
<b>CLASSES:</b>	<b>Company classes begin at 12:30 pm on Saturdays</b>

### Phone Calls

Please call during regular business hours with questions or for information about our Company. Outside of the business hours as noted above, you may leave a message regarding an absence on the voicemail or notify us by email at: [info@balletwashington.org](mailto:info@balletwashington.org)

To answer questions related to specific areas of the program, the following people may be contacted during regular office hours:

#### **Artistic Director: Nancy & Mick Gunter**

- Schedule an interview or audition
- Discuss student progress or career planning
- Discuss individual student concerns or injuries
- Emergencies

**Receptionists:**

- Fees
- General Information
- Schedule
- All Absences
- Rehearsal Excuse Forms

**2 0 1 9 – 2 0 20 SEASON**

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**Performance Requirements**

Student participation in performances will vary according to technical ability, height, age and number of years of experience. Casting in performances shall be at the sole discretion of faculty and the Artistic Director. Students will be required to perform in ballet productions. This provides students with the opportunity to learn repertoire, experiment with choreography, and gain performing experience.

All performance material will be learned and rehearsed based on a weekly schedule.

**STUDENTS CAN EXPECT TO BE CAST IN THE FOLLOWING PERFORMANCES:**

The Nutcracker .....December 6 -7 & 13 - 14 2019  
 Sleeping Beauty... .....April 24 – 25 & May 1 – 2 2020

**Emergencies & Cancellations**

In the event of an emergency - weather or other circumstances - the decision to cancel or postpone a performance or work will be made ONLY by the Artistic Directors. This decision will be made public on BTW’s homepage.

**In the event that you will be late or cannot make a performance, please inform BTW immediately, as follows:**

- If 2 hours or more prior to curtain and during normal business hours: call the Artistic Director – Nancy and Mick Gunter.

- If 2 hours or less to curtain: call the Artistic Director – Nancy/Mick Gunter
- In case of an emergency call Artistic Director – Nancy/Mick Gunter

### **Company Contracts & Company Calendar**

Annual contracts for the subsequent season along with a draft Dancer Calendar are distributed by June 24<sup>th</sup> of each year. *The Artistic Director may not be able to answer your questions about the following season until calendars are distributed.* **Please Note that company days are subject to change if the opportunity arises for Master Classes, Show Workshops or any other spontaneous performing art opportunity.**

### **Company Class**

Your participation in class is mandatory. Company Class is typically offered on Saturdays (Bi-weekly) and is scheduled from 12:30- 2:00PM. During Nutcracker performance and rehearsal weeks Company class WILL be scheduled. Be sure to consult the daily rehearsal schedule posted on the Company/Student Board and website for class time, location, and teacher.

### **BTW Conditioning (Pilates)**

Company Members are expected to part take in CBA Pilates or Pilates anywhere as part of their training and injury prevention. Pilates is a system of exercises that can use props or a special apparatus to improve physical strength, flexibility, posture and enhance mental awareness about our bodies strengths and weaknesses. Pilates can be performed on a floor mat and aims to improve physical conditioning with low impact exercises and stretches. Putting an emphasis on spinal and pelvic alignment, breathing, core strength as well as improving coordination and balance. Pilates is a great way to improve muscle tone, balance musculature, build flexibility and muscle strength as well as increase endurance in the legs, abdominals, arms, hips and back. Pilates is also a great way to customize the individual needs of dancers and can be tailored to work with all conditions. We provide Pilates for the purpose of dance injury prevention and dancer wellness.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR BTW FACILITIES**

### **Smoking & Weapons**

Smoking and Weapons are prohibited at all times on BTW property. Further, the Washington Indoor Clear Air Act prohibits smoking in all public places and within 25 feet of any entrance, exit, or ventilation intake.

### **First Aid**

First Aid kits are located in each of the studios and ice is located in the main office.

### **Building Evacuation**

Please familiarize yourself with the fire and earthquake evacuation plans posted in each studio and dressing rooms. When the fire alarm is sounded, exit the building immediately, according to the plan. All employees and dancers are to assemble in the back parking lot.

### **Dance Floor Guidelines, Food, & Beverage**

Please be mindful of food in and around dressing rooms and studios so as not to attract bugs or vermin. No chewing gum in the studios or on stage. Avoid exposing the floor to baby powder, sunscreen, body lotion, and fabrics that have been treated with a fabric softener. These softening agents may create slick spots on the floor. Only closed water bottles are allowed in the studios and backstage.

### **Company Meeting**

Students are required to attend the regularly scheduled Company meetings. Dates and times will be posted by the director at the beginning of each school year.

### **Photography**

Unauthorized photography (Photography by an outside photographer, not working for BTW) is not allowed in the studio or backstage without prior approval from the Artistic Director.

Photo opportunities are presented the tech rehearsal before opening night for families who wish to use this opportunity for photos.

## **Cell Phones**

All cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off while in the studio and backstage. BTW is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of such devices.

## **Pets**

As a courtesy, please do not bring pets in to the studio, performing stage, backstage or into dressing rooms.

## **Onstage**

Curtain call is an hour and a half before each scheduled performance. Please pick up your personal belongings and clear both onstage and backstage areas immediately. This will give the crew the opportunity to set the stage. During rehearsals and performances of story ballets, we request that no dance bags or other personal dancer items be left backstage at any time. Please leave these items in your dressing room.

## **Dressing Rooms**

You are responsible for keeping your dressing room clean. Please appropriately dispose of all trash. Please treat your costumes and dressers with respect. Please return all performance clothes to hangers or laundry baskets as directed. Please throw away unwanted items when moving out of the theater.

## **Valuables**

For your protection, jewelry and large amounts of cash should be left at home. Valuables should never be left in the dressing rooms.

## **STAGE ETIQUETTE**

### **Props**

- If you are working with a prop during a performance, it is your responsibility to check that prop and its location before the ballet begins. If you cannot find it, inform the Stage Manager immediately.



- Do not touch or move any prop you find if it is not yours.
- Do not sit on prop tables or prop furniture or handle props more than necessary.
- Return hand props that you carry offstage to the closest prop table.

### **Scenery and Lighting**

Avoid touching all scenery and soft goods, such as the legs (Drapes). Avoid stepping, standing, or sitting in front of the booms when the lights are on. Avoid touching stage sets and pieces unless authorized by the Stage Manager or Artistic Director.

## **COSTUMES**

### **Costume Fittings**

Costume fittings are part of the regular dancer workday and posted on the daily schedule. Please consider your fitting appointment as you would any scheduled rehearsal. If you are unable to make your fitting at the time specified, please notify the Costume Shop or Wardrobe as soon as possible and reschedule with the appropriate person(s).

Dancers are to remove costumes before exiting the stage to the audience. This is enforced to protect costumes and maintain dancer professionalism.

### **In the Theater**

In the theater please be respectful of your costumes and your dressing staff. Hang your costumes or deposit them in laundry collection baskets as directed, and in a timely manner. Please make sure that you report any costume problems to a member of the Wardrobe staff. Eating, smoking or drinking of colored beverages is not allowed while in costume. Sitting or lying on the floor while in costume is also prohibited unless dictated by choreography. (If drinking water please use a towel or cloth to cover your costume while drinking this prevents the possibility of water stains on certain fabrics).

Let it also be noted that dancers backstage are to remain in the green room away from the stage wings unless preparing to enter the stage. There is absolutely no mingling on side wings.

Dancers are to remain silent when backstage there is absolutely no talking as this is a distraction to other dancers preparing for their entrance, role and to the stage crew listening for cues.

## **COMPANY CLASS POLICY**

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### **Attendance**

Students are required to attend all scheduled classes and rehearsals. Progress is dependent upon consistent attendance and dedicated effort. Students are evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the year to determine technical proficiency, strength, and artistry.

### **Absence, Late Arrivals, and Tardiness**

Parents **must report all absences and late arrivals** to the receptionist. Absences and late arrivals must be cleared by the artistic director to be considered excused. The following circumstance will be considered: Illness and family emergency.

### **PLANNED ABSENCE**

We ask that families confine their vacations to school holidays listed on the calendar if at all possible. In the event that a student does need to miss class, the student must:

- Check with the Artistic Director, obtain a Planned Absence Form and return the form **TWO WEEKS** prior to the absence date to the Artistic Director: Nancy Gunter

### **Injury and Illnesses**

All students who must sit out due to a short-term injury are expected to observe technique classes and notate class combinations with correct vocabulary and spelling.

If a student becomes ill during the school day he or she must report to the receptionist and Artistic Director about possible day absences.

### **PUNCTUALITY**

Company members are expected to arrive 15 -30 mins prior to class to properly warm up and stretch before instruction begins.

## **GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT**

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The BTW is dedicated to creating an environment of artistic excellence, so that students may flourish as young artists and individuals. To further this objective, BTW provides a community that fosters its students' wellbeing and safety in a healthy social environment.

The diversity of the student body of the BTW in terms of nationality, culture, religion, race, and age makes it incumbent upon BTW to adopt and implement coherent standards of conduct and behavior for all students to exercise.

Beyond respectful, courteous, mature, and ethical behavior, the school also insists upon the observance of the highest moral standards by its staff and students and expects its older students to be positive and wholesome role models to the younger students.

### **Student Expectations and Regulations**

Students who attend Company are expected to:

- Be respectful and courteous towards faculty and staff, fellow classmates, guests, and visitors. All staff and faculty members are to be addressed by their preferred title and name. Students are requested to personally thank their instructors and accompanists after each class.
- Be positive role models for younger students.
- Do not behave in a way that will compromise the good name of BTW.
- Be prompt in attendance to classes, conferences, and assemblies.
- Respect studio property. Do not sit, lean on, or put anything on the Barres. Barres should be used for barre work only. Keep hands and bodies off and away from Mirrors.
- Deposit wrappers, containers, and other garbage into the trash cans. There is absolutely no gum allowed. Capped water bottles may be brought into classes and rehearsals.

- Keep dressing rooms clean and neat at all times. Do not leave anything valuable in the dressing rooms. It is discouraged to bring valuables to the studio, but if you have such items with you, please check them at the front desk. The BTW cannot be responsible for such items.
- Understand that drugs, smoking and alcohol are strictly prohibited.

The BTW reserves the right to consider the disciplinary history of any student prior to or after admission to the Company in evaluating and determining the consequences to be levied upon a student found to have violated the law and/or the Company's rules and policies, as may be promulgated from time to time.

## **Company Tiers**

### **Adagio Group**

#### **Requirements:**

- Take at least 2 Ballet classes per week (Minimum of 3 per week if on Pointe).
- Commit to BTW's two main productions of the season
- Help as a Big Sister/Big Brother to Community Cast Members.
- Parents required to fulfill volunteer duties for 2 major productions or pay buy out fee (\$100)
- Weekly Pilates class or equivalent highly recommended but not required.

#### **Benefits:**

- Invited to participate in select master classes and performance trips or workshops with the company ( Additional Payment will be required).
- May be considered as a dancer for the *Moonlight Madness* Ballet Showcase (Not Required).
- Priority Casting\* (Please see note below).
- Listed in programs as a BTW Company Member

### **Petit Allegro**

#### **Requirements:**

- Adagio Group Requirements Plus ...

- Third ballet class per week is generally needed
- Parents/Dancers participate in at least one fundraiser each year.
- Weekly Pilates Class or Equivalent is required for injury prevention.
- Additional classes in jazz or contemporary are encouraged but not required.

**Benefits:**

- Generally cast in all BTW shows (Participation is expected).
- Dancers may choreograph for Moonlight Madness Ballet Showcase.
- Bi – Weekly Company class included
- Several Master classes scheduled throughout year
- Special workshops and performance trips scheduled twice a year.

**Grand Allegro**

**Requirements:**

- All of the above Plus..
- Must take at least three ballet classes a week
- Classes in other dance forms highly encouraged

**Benefits:**

- Help with arranging opportunities and transportation for regular/periodic classes at professional schools or with highly respected teachers.
- Possibility of setting up private lessons and coaching
- Help with researching and auditioning for pre – professional and or college programs for further training.

## Nutrition and Wellness Procedures

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It is of utmost importance that dance students maintain a healthy lifestyle to ensure safety and success. BTW policies are as follows:

- It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they have sufficient, nutritionally sound food intake and adequate water to maintain optimum health and performance capabilities.
- Any nutrition issues will be addressed **exclusively** with the dancer, parent, if appropriate, and the Artistic Director. Discussion with other students, parents or faculty is strictly prohibited. This is a private and personal matter, and violation of that privacy will not be tolerated.
- Nutrition seminars will be offered for our dancers throughout the year to provide insight and understanding into the nutritional needs of a dancer and what this looks like.
- Dancer Injury and Wellness workshops will be offered for our dancers throughout the year to provide insight and understanding into the importance of self- care, injury prevention and proper stretching/strengthening.

**Please Sign and Return this paper by June 24<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**By signing below I, \_\_\_\_\_ and parent/guardian, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to terms and conditions listed in this Ballet Theatre of Washington Dancer Handbook. Agreeing to follow and uphold the expectations and responsibilities listed as a Company Dancer and Parent/Guardian. Failure to uphold this contracted agreement will forfeit the placement of dancer and parent/guardian in the company and the ability to audition for BTW again in the future.**

**Dancer: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**