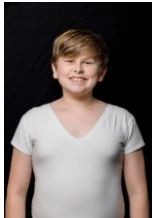


## Centralia Ballet Academy Company Members

CBA Company Members are chosen by audition. These young dancers not only perform in our major productions. They also participate in additional master classes, attend professional performances, choreograph and perform for our annual Halloween show, and more. They are given additional opportunities to expose them to the world of professional dance - past experiences have included master classes at the studios of Oregon Ballet Theatre, backstage tours with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, attending performances by Pacific Northwest Ballet and Dance Theatre of Harlem, training with Cirque du Soleil - and more.



**Cael Best** (Villager, Puss in Boots) - is a homeschooled 7th grader from Centralia. He has been dancing at Centralia Ballet Academy for the past seven years. Some of his favorite roles have included the title role in *The Nutcracker* and John Darling in *Peter Pan*. Cael expresses gratitude to his mentors, Nancy and Mick Gunter, Theresa McMurry, and Kyle Leapline, whose guidance and support have shaped his love for dance and artistry. When he isn't dancing, you can find Cael singing and acting or playing football and basketball. With dreams of pursuing a degree in performing arts, Cael aspires to bring joy and inspiration to audiences everywhere.



**McKenna Bryan** (Lilac Fairy) - is a senior at Rochester High School attending Centralia College. McKenna has been dancing at Centralia Ballet Academy since the age of 8, focusing primarily on ballet, pointe, and Pas de Deux. Her favorite roles include Wendy Darling in *Peter Pan* (2023), Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* (2024), and the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker* (2024). She would like to extend a huge thank you to Nancy and Mick Gunter, and her fellow dancers, for the joy, encouragement, and sense of community that CBA has brought her.



**Elsa Freeberg** - is a Sophomore at Rochester High School. She has been dancing for about twelve years, starting at Allen Creek Dance but switching to Centralia Ballet Academy at age 6. Her favorite roles have included Pirate doll and Owl in *The Nutcracker*. Outside of ballet, she enjoys reading and drawing.



**Samantha Gunter** (Aurora's friend, White Cat) - is a Freshman at W. F. West High School. She has received all of her dance training at CBA. Samantha is training in ballet, tap, jazz and lyrical dance. She plans to become an actress after she graduates.



**Emma Hashagen** (Aurora's friend, Little Red Riding Hood) - lives in Centralia and attends Onalaska Primer where she is in the 9th grade. She began dancing at the age of 3 at Allen Creek Dance Studio and moved to Centralia Ballet Academy when she was 6 years old. She is currently taking classes in ballet, pre-pointe, lyrical, jazz and character dance. Her favorite role so far has been Clara in Centralia Ballet Academy's production of *The Nutcracker* in 2023



**Owen Hedgers** (Prince Désiré, Bluebird, Aurora's Suitor) - is currently attending W. F. West High School as a senior. He has received all of his training at Centralia Ballet Academy, starting at the ages of 4. He is very thankful to Mick and Nancy Gunter and to Kyle Leapline for being amazing teachers and mentors.



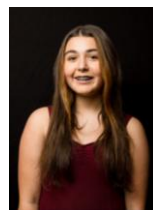
**Carter P. Johnston** (Aurora's Suitor, Villager, Ivan) - lives in Tumwater WA and is an eighth grader at Washington Middle School. He first became interested in ballet when he saw a performance of the CBA boys at the Olympia Dance Festival. He started taking classes with CBA at age six and has never stopped. He has held many roles in CBA shows, including playing the *Nutcracker* in 2022. When he's not dancing, Carter likes to hang out with the family horse and bakes really amazing madeleines, though usually he keeps the two activities separate.



**Lily Lennox** (Fairy of the Golden Vine, Jewel fairy) - Lily Lennox is a freshmen at Centralia High School. She has been dancing with Centralia Ballet Academy since she was about three years old. Her favorite roles that she has performed are Clara in *The Nutcracker* and Little Red Riding Hood in *The Sleeping Beauty*. She is appreciative of her parents for supporting her through her long journey of dance.



**Lucy Lennox** (Aurora's friend, Villager) - is a 7th grader at Centralia Middle School. She has been dancing at Centralia Ballet Academy since she was 3 years old. Her favorite role that she has had is Clara in *The Nutcracker*. She also enjoys hanging out with friends, playing volleyball and softball, and eating food.



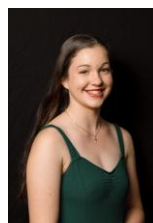
**Thalia Martinez** (Aurora's friend, Cinderella) - is a 7th grader at Chehalis Middle School. She has been dancing at Centralia Ballet Academy for five years. Her favorite role that she has had so far is Clara in *The Nutcracker*. She would like to thank family, friends, and her dance teachers who have helped her along the way. Other than ballet she enjoys

hanging out with friends and family and watching movies.



**Tess McMurry** (Princess Aurora, Jewel fairy) - is a senior at Centralia High School and is getting her AA at Centralia College. This is her thirteenth year at CBA. Her favorite roles have included the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker* and Carabosse in *The Sleeping Beauty*. After graduation, Tess plans to attend Central Washington University to study Aviation. She would like to thank grilled cheese and steamed

dumplings for getting her through senior year.



**Elaina Porter** (Crystal Fountain fairy, Duchess) - is a home-schooled Sophomore. All of her dance training has been at CBA. Her favorite roles are those of Snowflake and Arabian in this year's *Nutcracker*. Elaina enjoys the outdoors, barn dancing and drawing. She would like to thank her amazing teachers and parents for always supporting her.



**Briana Smith** (Woodland Glade Fairy, Princess Florine) - is an eighth grader at Chehalis Middle School and has been dancing with Centralia Ballet Academy for the last seven years. Some of her favorite roles include Diamond Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty* and Snow, Clara and Marzipan in *The Nutcracker*. Briana also loves to sing, play the oboe,

participate in theater, and choreograph. She hopes to become a music teacher, while still finding the time to teach and choreograph dance.



**Lydia Smith** (Princess Aurora, Jewel fairy) - is a Junior at W. F. West High School. She began dancing at age 3 and has danced at Centralia Ballet Academy for the past seven years. Lydia attended Oregon Ballet Theatre's summer intensive in 2023. Some of her favorite dance roles have been Wendy from *Peter Pan*, Lilac Fairy from *The Sleeping Beauty*, and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*. She plans on pursuing apparel design and merchandising. Lydia would like to thank her teachers, friends and family for supporting her.



**Adeline Wilhelmi** (Enchanted Garden fairy, Duchess) - is from Centralia, WA. She is currently in 10th grade. Adeline has been dancing for nine years. Outside of dance, Addie loves all kinds of arts, such as painting, drawing and crafting. She loves to indulge in a good book.



**Wesley Wilhelmi** (Prince Désiré, Bluebird, Aurora's suitor) - is homeschooled and in Running Start at Centralia College. He received his dance training through Centralia Ballet Academy. Over the years, he has danced many roles, including the Rat King in *The Nutcracker* and the title role in *Peter Pan*. He would like to thank his teachers, Nancy and Mick Gunter and Kyle Leapline.



**Jamiah Wood** (Carabosse, Diamond Fairy) is a Freshman at W. F. West High School. She has been dancing at Centralia Ballet Academy for eight years and has attended ballet intensives at Bennyroyce Dance, Ballet Austin and Oregon Ballet Theatre. Her favorite role she has performed is the Dewdrop Fairy in *The Nutcracker*. She also enjoys playing volleyball and eating food.