elevate
performance company

2024-2025 INFORMATION

Meet The Directors

Mary Shae Hooper, Director. Shae is SO excited to join the Elevate family this year. Shae graduated in 2021 from NYU Tisch Drama, earning her BFA in Musical Theatre, from the New Studio on Broadway. While at NYU, Shae became an assistant choreographer, shadowing incredible Broadway directors and choreographers and assisting their classes at the collegiate level. Since then, she has returned home to live and work in Austin.
Most recently, she played Belle in Magnolia Musical Theatre's Beauty and the Beast. She has also been seen on stage in Cabaret (NYU), Elegies for Angels Punks and Raging Queens (NYU), Disaster (NYU), Spring Awakening (NYU), Little Shop of Horrors (Zilker Theatre), and Playhouse Creatures (Sam Bass).
In addition to theatre, she has worked on independant films, music videos, and short films, for which she has received festival nods. She was the full-time stand in on HBOMax's Love and Death, and made her network TV debut as Diana on the CW's Walker.
Shae has worked as a performer, director, choreographer, writer, and film crew professionally in NYC and Austin. She has been teaching since she was 17 for Broadway and local performers of all ages. Shae has the support of her rockstar husband, Harrison, and looks forward to you all meeting her new baby boy, Indiana (you will see him a LOT)!! They live on 5 acres with their goldendoodle, Hercules.

Chantel Mead, Vocal Coach. Chantel has been bringing her particular brand of joy and empowerment to musical theatre programs for youth in both private schools and community programs for over 20 years - from Boulder, to NYC, to Austin. Last year, she enjoyed leading Elevate as Director, and this year she's very excited to step back into her previous role as Vocal Director!

Chantel holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Sam Houston State, has many years of her own experience on stage (including playing Sandy in Grease and Audrey in Little Shop!), and she almost made it to a masters in Vocal Pedagogy at CU Boulder, but 9/11 led her out of academia and back into the arts more actively.

Chantel also runs her own private voice studio, is a singer, songwriter, & recording artist, and is also the lead singer of local jazz/funk/soul band Boogaloo Groove. She is married to a touring musician husband, and is a homeschool momma to her daughter, Xyla, who also attends Balance and is passionate about all things dance, musical theatre and art!

Learn more about Chantel at www.ChantelMead.com

Meet The Directors

Shawna Hesketh, Broadway Babies Director. Shawna Hesketh started dancing at an early age, at her one-room studio, in her small central Texas hometown. Her love of dance continued to grow, and she went on to join her high school's drill/dance team, and then began teaching dance at the age of 16. She attended Sam Houston State University, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree, in Photography and Dance. While at SHSU, she was in several performances, including a graduate thesis, and also worked in the costume department for their Nutcracker production. After moving to Austin, she got back into dance full-time, diving into ballroom dancing. Shawna then joined Balance Dance Studios, in the fall of 2012, in its inaugural year. Since then, she has created a home and family with Balance, and now gets to share this journey with her two children, as she watches them dance and grow.

Hannah Strieber, Production Assistant grew up in Austin, Tx where she began dancing at Balance Dance Studios in high school. She was a part of multiple companies including Ignite Dance Company and Elevate Performance Company. Along with this, she took many different classes covering a variety of styles. Because she discovered her love for dance in her teens, she understands the hard work and dedication it takes to develop skills, technique, and self-discipline. In 2019 she moved to Chicago to pursue her BFA in Film and Television with a concentration in Production Design. Alongside her work in film, televisions, and photoshoots, she was a gymnastics coach for ages 3-12 for multiple years in Chicago while also continuing her dance education. Hannah is extremely excited to be back home in Texas where she can use her creative skills to help the next generation develop a passion for the arts.

Elevate Performance Company

AT BALANCE DANCE STUDIOS

Our Mission

Here at Elevate, we are dedicated to providing a welcoming place where all young performers can explore the performing arts! We train students in the three disciplines of Musical Theatre: voice, acting, and dance. Performers will receive the highest standard of training while being a part of our theatre family.

We request that all our company members arrive to class with:

- A positive attitude
- A willingness to listen and learn from teachers and peers
- Respect for every company member, teachers, and the studio
- Willingness to explore, be bold, and have fun!

Opportunities

- **Fall Showcase** - A revue is a type of multi-act popular theatrical entertainment that combines music, dance, and sketches. Fall Showcase will be held at our in-house Black Box theatre, located at Balance Dance Studios.
- **Winter Community Outreach** - Throughout the holiday season, we will have extra-curricular opportunities to engage in performance during community events. This could include parades, caroling, festivals, etc.
- **Spring Musical** - A full-scale musical, featuring the Elevate company members, and held at a larger off-site venue.
- **Spring Recital** - the company will perform one featured number from the Spring Musical during the Recital
- **Social gatherings** throughout the year, such as movie nights, banquets, and company retreat.

Elevate Performance Company

AT BALANCE DANCE STUDIOS

Our Team

Our company is divided into four groups; each company member is assessed on his/her ability, attitude, and age, to assure we have the perfect collection of students in each group. Please note that the ages listed below are a suggestion, but ability and attitude will impact your performer's placement.

Broadway Babies
5-7 years

Act One
7-9 years

Act Two
9-11 years

Act Three
12+ years

Elevate Performance Company

AT BALANCE DANCE STUDIOS

About Our Program

Multi-age musical theatre training is incredibly important for Elevate Performance Company, as it provides numerous benefits for both the young performers and the older, more experienced ones.

For younger performers, working alongside older and more experienced performers provides them with valuable role models to look up to and learn from. They are able to observe and learn from the techniques, skills, and work ethic of their older peers, which can inspire them to strive for excellence in their own performances. This can also help build their confidence and self-esteem, as they are given the opportunity to work alongside more experienced performers and be a part of a larger, more complex production.

For the older performers, it allows them to pass on their knowledge and become leaders within our company. Additionally, working with younger performers can also provide them with a new perspective on their own craft and can be a source of inspiration and rejuvenation.

Overall, multi-age musical theatre training in Elevate Performance Company is an important aspect of the company's mission to provide a supportive, nurturing environment where performers of all ages can grow and thrive. It allows for the development of important skills such as teamwork, collaboration, communication, and empathy, while also fostering a sense of community and belonging among performers of different ages and backgrounds.

Broadway Babies

AGES 5-7

Here at Elevate, we are dedicated to providing a welcoming place where all young performers can explore the performing arts! Broadway Babies is the perfect introduction to musical theatre for our performers aged 5-6 years. We condense voice, acting, and dance into one, action-packed hour!

Group Schedule

Broadway Babies will meet once a week for one hour, and each class will include acting, singing and dancing. There may be some additional rehearsals, during the lead up to shows, in order to rehearse with the entire company.

Broadway Babies

Tuesday, 5-6pm
Elevate Rehearsal

PLUS 1 hr of another Dance style of your choice

Opportunities

- **Winter Revue** - Broadway Babies will perform at least one number of their own in the revue, as well as possibly being incorporated into other numbers, if time allows. This will be held at our in-house Black Box theatre, located at Balance Dance Studios.
- **Spring Show** - Broadway Babies will perform at least one number in our full-scale spring musical. This full-scale musical, featuring the Elevate company members, will be held off site, at a larger venue.
- **Spring Recital** - the company will perform one featured number from the Spring Musical during the Recital
- **Social gatherings** throughout the year, such as retreat, banquets, and movie nights!

Act 1, 2, & 3

AGES 7+

These are the core groups of Elevete. Every member from these groups is eligible for any role or character. We meet for our large group rehearsals once a week, with some additional rehearsals based on necessity and casting. Students can be any level of skill, but must have a passion and aptitude for musical theatre.

Group Schedule

Act One

Tuesday
4-5pm Jazz Technique
5-7pm Elevate Rehearsal

Act Two and Three

Tuesday
5-8pm Elevate Rehearsal

PLUS, one additional jazz class.

Opportunities

- **Winter Revue** - Broadway Babies will perform at least one number of their own in the revue, as well as possibly being incorporated into other numbers, if time allows. This will be held at our in-house Black Box theatre, located at Balance Dance Studios.
- **Spring Show** - Broadway Babies will perform at least one number in our full-scale spring musical. This full-scale musical, featuring the Elevate company members, will be held off site, at a larger venue.
- **Spring Recital** - the company will perform one featured number from the Spring Musical during the Recital
- **Social gatherings** throughout the year, such as retreat, banquets, and movie nights!

Additional Enrichment

13+ only

Throughout the year, we want to provide additional opportunitiese for our older students intereseted in continuining their pursuit of the arts and/or theatre. These programs will include masterclasses with Broadway professionals, learning series, and college audition prep.

Opportunities

Broadway Bound

4-6 week long courses on Saturdays incorporating higher level material (such as Broadway choreography) or guest teaching artists.

College Audition Prep

High schoolers interested in potentially majoring in Muscial Theatre, Acting, Drama, etc. will be given one-on-one coaching of their college materials. They will receive hand-selected songs and other materials needed for the college process.

These classes will come at an additional tuition and held on Monday nights or Saturday afternoons. As most high schoolers are involved in school theatre, we want to provide these classes at a convenient time so they may continue to train while staying involved in their schools. Our goal is for these classes to supplement what they are learning and bring their work to the next level. Our guest teaching artists will be professionals at the highest level, calling our students to a higher standard of performance abillity.

Audition Information

Balance Dance Studios is pleased to announce the annual auditions for the Elevate Performance Company. The company strives to offer professional instruction in dance, voice and acting for the true 'triple threat' experience. We encourage all students to join us at the audition; no experience is necessary, just a willingness to learn!

BROADWAY BABIES

Broadway Babies Audition (Ages 5-7)
May 14th | 5:00pm-6:00pm

All current Broadway Babies, and those new to Elevate, will have a lighthearted and fun "audition" structure similar to what a regular class would look like. They will learn a portion of a song, and a dance, and then will "audition" as a group, but if some students want to try their audition solo, we will also provide the opportunity at the end of class. The song will be a familiar Disney song that we will sing together in class with call and response method so those who are still working on their reading skills can easily participate.

ACT 1, 2, & 3

Ages 7+
May 14th | 5:00pm - 8:00pm

For auditions this year, students will **only need to prepare a song**.

- **Acting**: Students will be asked to read simple scenes and play games during the audition.
- **Movement/Dance**: a 16 bar dance routine will be taught during the audition.
- **Singing**: Students may chose one of the 4 songs posted on the website OR communicate with the director ahead of time for approval if they have a different song they would like to sing.
  - Please note: performers should be **prepared to sing the first 30-60 secs** of their chosen song. It must be memorized and they should be prepared to *sing with the INSTRUMENTAL track*.

Time Commitments

FALL/SPRING GROUP SCHEDULE

Broadway Babies

Tuesday, 5-6pm
Elevate Rehearsal

PLUS 1 hr of another Dance style of your choice

Act One

Tuesday
*4-5pm Jazz Technique**
5-7pm Elevate Rehearsal

Act Two and Three

Tuesday
5-8pm Elevate Rehearsal

PLUS, at least one additional dance class to support their training.

All classes will take place at Balance Dance Studios. Please make sure your performer arrives with: *appropriate dance attire, hair pulled back, water bottle, and snack.*

Please Note:* **The additional dance class can be replaced with other Balance Dance Studios' classes, per Director approval. If your performer is also in another other company at Balance, *additional classes do not need to be added.*

Frequently Asked Questions

"Are parents expected to help out?"

Parent involvement is essential to the success of any type of educational theatre, however, that can come in many forms. Throughout the year, we will post on the Band App areas in which we need support (from helping to make sets/costumes, to hands on deck for the shows, to running quick errands). Please know we are exceedingly grateful for any time and talent you can contribute to your child's experience!

"Why do my students have to take an additional dance class? Don't they dance during the rehearsal?"

Yes! However, we want our students to become the best triple threats they can be. That requires dance technique class to be taken outside of rehearsals to learn the basics, strengthen their bodies to avoid injury, and build upon skills they can offer while in production rehearsals.

"My child would rather do two musicals a year. What is the Winter Revue?"

A revue is a type of multi-act, popular theatrical entertainment that combines music, dance, and sketches. We will be able to learn all of the necessities to put on a full-scale musical such as acting through a song, ensemble collaboration, as well as working on material from musicals we could not otherwise do/don't have access to the rights (i.e. Wicked, Mean Girls, HAMILTON!!).

Fall/Spring Requirements

MANDATORY COMPANY REQUIREMENTS

One Year Commitment - All students are committed to the Elevate Company from June 2024-May 2025.

Tuesday Rehearsals - attend weekly rehearsals at the assigend time for their group within the company.

Extra Dance Class - All members of Elevate Performance Company are required to take at least one additional dance class, preferably jazz, outside of Elevate rehearsal to ensure growth of technique, stamina, and strength at Balance Dance Studios. Failure to uphold these requirements could result in removal of company members.

Extra Rehearsals - Extra rehearsals will take place closer to show time; these dates will be released at the beginning of the year, and all students called must be in attendance (The Directors will let you know well in advance who is called). *Please note*: while we try to plan ahead of time, additional rehearsals may need to be added closer to the show.

Summer Requirements

ALL ELEVATE (INCLUDING BROADWAY BABIES)

BOOST YOUR TRAINING THIS SUMMER!

Mandatory Summer Intensive - The Elevate Performance Company intensive will take place **July 22nd through 25th** (mon-thur), from **11:30am-3:30pm**, at Balance Dance Studios. This is required for all Elevate Company Members (including Broadway Babies. who will have an abbreviated schedule).

Team Building Retreat - Our Retreat takes place on **Friday, July 26th**. This is a mandatory day of fun for ALL of our company to bond and kick start the season with our new team! Fee includes all food and activities for the day.

Optional (but highly recommended) Summer Workshop - Musical Theater Workshop (*Movie Musical Magic*) Tue and Thur,
June 25th and 27th, 9:00 am-12:00pm (does not include Broadway Babies)

Required Summer Class - Take ONE weekly class at Balance (or total 8 hours). Does not have to be consecutive. (Taking the Musical Theater Workshop: *Movie Musical Magic* is 8 hours, and would apply to these hours).

Additional Details

Elevate Binder

Each student will be provided a ringed binder at the Elevate Summer Intensive with the following items:

- Some sheet protectors
- Notebook paper
- A pencil and highlighter

These binders will be a safe place to keep all scripts and song sheets that we will use in class. We buy the rights to each musical we perform; therefore, your performer will also receive an official script to take home for their spring musical.

Communication

Company members will receive all important information via the **Elevate email** and **Band App**. We ask that all parents (and students if allowed) join Band App and include their full name with picture. We also post plenty of pics and videos of your children on the Band app as well!

Welcome to Elevate!