



2021-2022 INFORMATION

Meet the Director



KELSY LEYENDECKER

director

Kelsy Leyendecker began her dance training at the age of 3 and has been teaching and choreographing since the age of 16. She began her dance studies and competitive years at Irvine Dance Academy, but went on to receive training at some of the best studios in the country in the styles of ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, hip hop, cheer, tumbling, and musical theatre. She has had the opportunity to study under legends such as Joe Tremaine, Doug Caldwell, Molly Lynch, Christine Baltes, Jerome Robins, and Susan Stroman. In addition to them, she credits much of her growth and passion to her first mentor, Monie Adamson, who is a 3 time Emmy nominee and 2004 American Choreography Award winner.

While still in high school, Kelsy also participated in her drill team, varsity cheer and show choir. During this time, she also began experimenting with choreography for her high school show choir and other local area theatre and children's programs. As a diverse performer, Kelsy danced as an extra on a couple TV shows, strutted the parade routes and stages of Disneyland, and toured parts of the US as a member of the company, "Dance N' ETC" and the "Concordia University Professional Chamber Choir." She quickly found another passion in musical theatre and was cast in multiple theatre company ensembles and lead roles for musicals. Upon moving to the Austin area, Kelsy explored several studios, in addition to forming her own homeschool dance company. She fell in love with Balance and made it her teaching home. After a few years at the studio, Kelsy was asked to help direct Elevate, and also spent a year directing with Push Dance Company, before starting Ignite Dance Company. She is proud to be a part of the Austin dance community and loves teaching her students of all ages at Balance Dance Studios.



SHAWNA HESKETH

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.

What Is Ignite?

"NO PRESSURE, JUST PASSION"

Our Mission

IGNITE Dance Company combines the joys of being on a competitive dance team with the freedom and flexibility to maintain other activities. This team only requires 3.5 hours of class at the highest level, one day per week, but dancers are encouraged to take as many as they can, in addition to their minimum requirements. They are only required to attend two competitions per season, in addition to participation in their own team showcase. They also have the opportunity to perform in Balance Dance Studios' winter show and spring recitals. Ignite members are welcome to join the studio at as many other optional studio events as they would like. Ignite Dance Company offers newer dance members a great way to dip their toes into the competition world, as well as an opportunity for advanced dancers who may want to take a step back from rigorous training, or participate in other companies at the studio. We are serious about our training and require our students to "bring the passion, and leave the pressure behind."

Opportunities

Time Management Skills
Low Time Commitment with Big Results
Local Performances
Competitive Growth
Flexibility with Other Commitments
Drill Team Relationships and Support
Team Building Skills
Leadership Building
& More!

Audition Details

MAY 21ST | AGES 5-7 | 4:30PM-5:30PM

Dance Jam

This process will run more like a fun dance class. We do not treat this as an audition for these young ones. We will create a fun class where we casually evaluate the attendees for summer and fall class placement. If we feel they are ready to join the company, we will offer them a position on our team. If they aren't quite ready, we will let them know the best class options for summer and fall enrollment to prepare them for the next season. We are looking for students who have a combination of basic body awareness, maturity, passion, motivation, and ability to remember a pattern of steps/movement. Some parents prefer not to even use the word "audition" with their students, and we fully support that as well.

Come join us for a fun class evaluation!

MAY 23

AGES 7-12 | 1PM CHECK IN - AUDITION 1:30-3:30PM

AGES 13+ | 3:30PM CHECK IN - AUDITION 4-7PM

A jazz combo will be taught the week of May 17th-21st.
(\$20 drop in rate per class)

Dancers ages 7-12: Combo will be taught and rehearsed on Monday, May 17th, at 5:30pm, and Thursday, May 20th, from 5:30pm-6:30pm

Dancers ages 13+: Combo will be taught on Monday, May 17th from 6:30pm-7:30pm or 7:30pm-8:30pm, and Wednesday 6:30pm-7:30pm or 8pm-9pm. Students can attend as many in their age group as they'd like to register for. This routine will also be posted, once available, on the Audition Info website.

Registration is open!

www.balancedancestudios.com/ignite-audition-info/

Please click tabs to fill out the online application and register.

*If you or your dancer have any questions or conflicts regarding registration, please don't hesitate to reach out.

We work really hard to make this a fun process.

Email: ignite@balancedancestudios.com

AGES 5-7

AGES 7-12 & 13+

REGISTER

Audition Details

DAY OF AUDITION

EVALUATION

Evaluation (5-7): Dancers will follow a simple jazz class format, including a high energy warm up and stretching. Following this will be some basic skills demonstrations across the floor and a simple character style dance, with the option to show off any of their favorite moves or special skills.

Evaluation (7+): Dancers will sign in, receive their audition numbers and head to the warm up room to prepare. Dancers will go through a very simple ballet warm up, to prepare their bodies and demonstrate basic ballet technique. No previous ballet experience is required for this. Then, there will be a quick contemporary phrase, taught on the spot, to see how dancers learn new choreography and interpret movement. This will not be perfect. We just want to see how they learn and interpret. After this, there will be some across the floor jazz skills, followed by the performing of the jazz piece in groups.

CLOTHING

Dancers are expected to come to auditions wearing studio dress code attire for a jazz class. The preferred style would be the clean lines of a solid leotard and leggings. If necessary, dance shorts and/or tights are acceptable. Please no baggy clothing or busy patterns/styles. We prefer clean simple lines. Hair can be worn in any style but should look professional and completely out of the face. For example, slicked back ponytails or a variety of braids and buns are a great choice. Please no loose hair, unless very short, as this creates a distraction, as well as the occasional safety hazard. Any variety of ballet, jazz or lyrical shoes are acceptable, as well as bare feet. Students are welcome to change shoes as we change styles as well. No jewelry or watches will be allowed other than stud earrings. The use of watches and phones will be strictly prohibited once auditions begin. Please leave those in your bags or at home. No photography or videos will be allowed once auditions have started. During check in and warmups however, please feel free to use these items as desired and, if you post on social media, feel free to tag us: @balanceddancestudios and @ignite.dance.co!

RESULTS

Dancers will be notified of their audition results via email on or before Sunday, May 30th. At this time, you will be asked to review all company paperwork and complete necessary steps to prepare for an individual planning meeting with your team director. Our first team gathering will be our Summer Kick Off Potluck where we will go over some important information, meet our teams and families, and discuss other items, such as parents jobs, the esteemed high school Internships and officer application/selection process.

REGISTRATION IS
OPEN!
CLICK HERE

Important Dates

REQUIREMENTS

- Summer Potluck - June 11th
- Summer Intensive Options: Ballet Intensive, Balance Intensive, Axis Intensive
- Mandatory Company Retreat - Aug 7-8th
- Choreo week - Aug 9-13th
- Winter Show - Dec 12th (subject to change)
- 2 Competitions- TBD Jan-May
- Spring Recital - May 15th (subject to change)
- Illuminate Banquet- May TBD
- Illuminate Showcase- May TBD

Summer Requirements

Summer requirements are 1 hour of class per week for all teams. Embers, Flames, Blaze, Inferno and Wildfire must choose one intensive to attend as well. Fireflies and Sparks are strongly encouraged to consider intensive options or additional classes as well. The summer retreat and choreo week are also important requirements that set us off in the right direction for the upcoming season. Failure to participate in these events may result in your student not being able to participate in the upcoming season.

Please list any conflicts on the audition application and email ignite@balancedancestudios.com to discuss with the director.

2021-22 Participation Agreement

SUMMER INTENSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Training/Conditioning of 1 class hour per week for all members (enrolled by team), and for Embers, Flames, Blaze, Inferno and Wildfire, please choose 1 or more of the intensive options below:

Ballet Intensive 6/7-6/11: The ballet intensive curriculum focuses on strong technique rooted in the traditions of classical ballet with elements of contemporary movement. It is designed to help advanced dancers in the development of solid technique and artistic style through the challenging combinations and variations presented in each class. In each class, dancers will have the opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for dance and movement, while growing in athleticism, artistry, clarity, grace, speed, and musicality.

- Mini (L1 & L2) | W-F 11:30am-2:30pm | \$150
- Int (L3 PreQual/L2 Approval Needed) | M-F 11:00am-3:00pm | \$300
- HI/ADV (L4 & L5) | M-F 11:00am-3:30pm | \$350

Balance Intensive June 21-24: Our Balance Intensive is designed to inspire dancers and further their technical and artistic training in a welcoming, all-inclusive environment. This program is ideal for the dancer who would like to broaden his/her understanding of various dance styles and may be interested in getting into the convention or competitive dance team world. Classes will be taught by our passionate, engaging, in-house instructors and is a great opportunity for students to get exposure to more of our BDS faculty. In order to allow for more class time and lower the pressure of performing, there won't be an end of week performance.

- Ages 7+ Advanced Beginner | 12:30pm-2:30pm | \$135
- Ages 11+ Intermediate | 11:00am-3:00pm | \$250
- Ages 13+ | Advanced | 11:00am-3:30pm | \$295

Axis Intensive 7/26-7/30: This comprehensive intensive is designed for motivated dancers who come to be trained, inspired and often transformed by this incredible dance experience. Students will have an opportunity to refine their skills and broaden their dance vocabulary while being exposed to guest master teachers from coast to coast who will push them to unexplored limits. AXIS Intensive is a week dedicated to the growth of each dancer as a physical technician, as well as an expressive and articulate artist. Taking part in this intensive will help bring students' performance quality to a new level. Designed for the serious multi-level artist, this intensive is geared for those with an eye toward pre-professional quality performance

- Ages 7-10 Int | W-F 11:30am-3:00pm | \$160
- Ages 11+ High Int | M-F 10:30am-3:30pm | \$350
- Ages 13+ Adv | M-F 10:00am-4:00pm | \$399

2021-22 Participation Agreement

SUMMER REQUIREMENTS

Classes/Workshops: Minimum class enrollment is 1 hour of jazz per week, placed with their teams, so that dancers can progress week to week with the same instructor and classmates. But we understand that with summer travel, some dancers may have to load up classes, at the beginning or end of the summer, in the form of make ups. Optional weekly workshops are offered to allow dancers to submerge themselves in additional specialities as well. Full descriptions of each are available. Students may take as many additional classes as they wish, including ballet (strongly recommended), to maintain their current level.

Competition Prep (applicable to all Ignite teams):

- Choreography Camp (\$125-\$250) depending on team placement): 8/9-8/13
We will set the bulk of competition choreography during this week.
- If you cannot be here for Choreography Camp, it is possible that you may not be able to participate in the 2021-2022 Ignite season.
- The schedule will not be available until all contracts are signed and teams solidified.

Team Building (applicable to all Ignite teams):

Company Retreat: 8/7-8/8:

- Saturday 10am drop-off until 3pm pick up on Sunday.
- The fee estimate is \$80 for all company members.
- The overnight rate includes the overnight stay (ages 11+), lunch and snacks, activities, and the day rate includes all of the above except the overnight stay.
- Sparks and Fireflies will have to have designated adults for supervision purposes.
- Retreat is mandatory and will be a fabulous team bonding experience prior to kicking off choreography week.
- Location: Youth Camp facilities near La Grange, TX

Summer Class Requirements and Pricing:

All Ignite teams are required to take 8 total hours (\$168) of technique class with their team over the summer (equivalent to 1 hour/week). If students are gone for part of the summer, they can double up where necessary. Intensives do not count toward class requirements.