



2023-2024 INFORMATION



Meet The Directors



Peyton Calhoon, Artistic Director. Peyton Calhoon is an Austin Native and has been dancing and performing since she was 9. She attended Shenandoah Conservatory, in 2017-2018, before moving to New York City. Shortly after that, she became a soloist dancer in the Las Vegas Production of "Purple Reign: The Prince Tribute Show", alongside fiancé, Donelvan Thigpen, headlining the role of Prince. She is mother to a baby girl, Aliyah! Peyton has always had a love for children, and taught dance and musical theater classes, since she was in high school. She currently works at Summer Stock Austin, as an Associate Producer and Head Marketing Manager. She also is an instructor with the Adderley School. Peyton Calhoon has a deep love for the arts and takes pride in helping to spread the power of creativity and share the impact that the arts have had on her life.

Kelsy Leyendecker, Dance Director. She began dancing at the age of 3 and has been teaching since the age of 16 years old. She began her 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 mentor, Monie Adamson who is a 3 time Emmy nominee and 2004 American Choreography Award winner. As a diverse performer, Kelsy danced as an extra on a couple TV shows, strutted the parade routes and stages of Disneyland as well as toured parts of the US as a member of the company, "Dance N' ETC" and the "Concordia professional Chamber Choir". She quickly found her passion in musical theatre and was cast in multiple roles such as Penny in "Swingtime" and Carol in "South Pacific". She is proud to be a part of the Austin dance community and loves teaching all her students of all ages at Balance Dance Studios.



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.

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

- Winter Revue - A revue is a type of multi-act popular theatrical entertainment that combines music, dance, and sketches. The Revue will be held at our in-house Black Box theatre, located at Balance Dance Studios.
- Spring Musical - A full-scale musical, featuring the Elevate company members, and held at a larger off-site venue.
- 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
5-6 years

Act One
7-8 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 5-6

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.
- Social gatherings throughout the year, such as retreat, banquets, and movie nights!

Act 1, 2, & 3

AGES 7+

These are the core groups of Elevate. 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 of these jazz classes:

MONDAY - 6:00pm 10+

WEDNESDAY - 7:00pm 12+

THURSDAY - 8:00pm 10+

Opportunities



- Winter Revue - A revue is a type of multi-act popular theatrical entertainment that combines music, dance, and sketches. The Revue will be held at our in-house Black Box theatre, located at Balance Dance Studios.
- Spring Musical - A full-scale musical, featuring the Elevate company members, and held at a larger off-site venue.
- Social gatherings throughout the year, such as movie nights, banquets, and company retreat.

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!

AGES 5-6 BROADWAY BABIES

Broadway Babies Audition (Ages 5-6)

May 16th | 4:00pm-5:00pm

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.

AGES 7+

Ages 7+

May 16th | 5:00pm - 8:00pm

Please prepare:

- A one minute cut of a Musical Theatre song.
- A one minute monologue.
- A short dance.

**All materials will be sent prior to prospective students, and students will CHOOSE ONE song & monologue from a list of options. A video of a short dance will be provided. All students must learn these materials on their own, PRIOR to the audition.

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, one of these jazz classes:

MONDAY - 6:00pm 10+

WEDNESDAY - 7:00pm 12+

THURSDAY - 8:00pm 10+

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

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.

**Classes can be replaced with other Balance Dance Studios' classes, per Director approval. If your performer already takes other classes for another company, additional classes do not need to be added.*

Frequently Asked Questions

Your Students are Growing; the Company should too!

We see the passion our students have for the arts and the opportunities they yearn to be a part of! In order to get there, we must "elevate" our practices to guide them to achieve those goals!



"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 student only wants to 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!!).

Requirements

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.

Mandatory 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 must be in attendance. Please note that, while we try to plan ahead of time, circumstances may necessitate additional rehearsals after original rehearsals are posted.

Team Building/Retreat

Our retreat will take place on June 4th. 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.

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.



Fall/Spring Requirements

MINIMUM COMPANY REQUIREMENTS

All students are committed to one full year with the Elevate Company, June 2023– May 2023, with the following minimum requirements:

Broadway Babies Fall Rehearsal Time: Tuesday 5pm–6pm

Act 1 Fall Rehearsal Times: Tuesday 5pm–7pm

Act 2 & Act 3 Fall Rehearsal Times: Tuesday 5pm–8pm



All members of Elevate Performance Company are **required** to take an 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.

Mandatory 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 must be in attendance.

Summer Requirements

ALL ELEVATE (INCLUDING BROADWAY BABIES)

BOOST YOUR TRAINING THIS SUMMER!

Mandatory Summer Intensive: The Elevate Performance Company intensive will take place Aug 7-11th, from 11:00am-3:30pm, at Balance Dance Studios. This is required for all Elevate Company Members (including Broadway Babies. who will have an abbreviated schedule).

Optional (but highly recommended) Summer Workshop: Musical Theater Workshop (100 Years of Disney) Tue to Thur, June 6-8, 12:30-2:30pm (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: 100 Years of Disney could apply to these hours (this is 9 hrs total).

*Join our wacky, creative,
and driven family!*

