

# WISSAHICKON DANCE ACADEMY PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

## ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Wissahickon Dance Academy (WDA)** was established over 20 years ago as a ballet school by Nancy Malmed, a professionally trained ballet dancer with a Masters Degree in Dance from Temple University.
- Ballet classes range from pre-ballet through pre-professional and adult; Jazz and Tap classes range from beginning through advanced, as well as classes in hip hop and yoga.
- The school's curriculum meets the needs of the casual dancer as well as the dancer on track for a professional career.
- WDA's professional ballet faculty teaches the *Vaganova* method of classical ballet - the method used in the former Soviet Union that produced ballet greats including Nureyev, Makarova, and Baryshnikov. The *Vaganova* method emphasizes physical strength, flexibility, body placement, and artistic expression.
- WDA students are invited to audition for *The Nutcracker* with the DONETSK BALLET OF UKRAINE on Sunday, September 21, 2008. This professional production will be performed on December 20, 2008 at Plymouth/Whitemarsh High School.

## SCHOOL POLICIES

- Ballet students must take a minimum of 2 classes per week with the exception of students in Pre-Ballet, Elementary and Beginning Ballet 1.
- All new students with previous experience must take a placement class.
- Promotion is based on individual merit and is at the discretion of the director.
- Classes begin promptly; please be punctual.
- Students are expected to have a positive attitude toward learning and be respectful of their teachers and peers.
- All students must sign in
- Students must inform the school if they have to miss class or rehearsal.
- Students should be picked up promptly after class.
- Ballet students' hair must be secured neatly in a bun.
- No earrings and jewelry
- No gum chewing

## TUITION POLICIES

- Tuition is based on the Year-Long Academic Season - from September 8, 2008 to June 6, 2009. It can be paid in 9 monthly installments or at a \$15 discount in 3 installments
- The season is contains 36 weeks, including three vacation weeks.
- Tuition payments are due regularly, regardless of student attendance. Missed classes can be made up anytime between September and May. The summer program is separate. Students may not "take a month off" and rejoin without compensation for that month. If for any reason classes must be discontinued for a period of time, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the office in writing. You are financially responsible for payments until such notification has been received by the office.

**There are two payment options: (See brochure for current prices)**

1. Nine-payment plan.

Payments are due the first of the month beginning Sept. 1, through May 1, regardless of number of weeks in the month. Please note that some months may be short (3 weeks) and some will be long (5 weeks). There is no payment in June. All monthly payments go toward full payment of the annual fee.

2. Three-payment plan (trimester, \$15 discount)

Payments are due Sept. 1, Dec. 1, and March 1.

- The three payment discount will not be honored if payment is late.
- **LATE FEE - \$5 per month** (after the 10th of the month). Bills are sent for late payment only
- **DANCE CARD** - Adults only may purchase a dance card of 10 classes for \$140, good for 3 months.
- **FAMILY DISCOUNT** - Each additional family member will receive a 10% discount
- **ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS, DEDUCTIONS OR CREDIT for missed classes.** Missed classes can be made up anytime between September to May. Students should arrange for makeup classes with their teacher.
- **\$15 charge for all returned checks**

**PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES**

**The Annual Spring Recital** is for the entire children's division of the student body

- **Recital Fee** - In order to participate in the Spring Recital, each family must pay a fee of \$96. Each family will receive 8 tickets to the performance and can purchase additional tickets, if necessary. Tickets are reserved and will be available on a first come, first serve basis.
- **Costume deposit - A non-refundable fee of \$25 per costume** for the Annual Spring Recital fee is due Jan. 1, 2009. Balances for the costumes will be due by March 1.
- **No costumes will be distributed until all fees are paid, including May tuition.**

**The Nutcracker with the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine**

- This performance is optional and by audition only.
- Auditions are September 21 at the studio, 5PM for children ages 5-9, and 6PM for students ages 10 and up. There is a \$14 audition fee.
- There will be three performances held December 18-20, 2008. Rehearsals will be on Sunday evenings starting on September 28th .

**IBE Residency performances** (see IBE under Fund Raising)

- Intermediate and advanced ballet students at WDA will perform in May with ballet students participating in the IBE residency program. These free performances will be held in the daytime for school children throughout the city. WDA students should receive community service credits for their participation.

- Participation in WDA performances is contingent on adequate class and rehearsal attendance and is at the discretion of the director. Students will not be permitted to perform if there are more than three absences once rehearsals have begun.
- All fees must be paid in full** in order for your child to perform.

### **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

Thanksgiving weekend  
 Winter Break December 22 to Jan. 3, 2009, Classes resume Jan. 5, 2009  
 Spring Break March 21-28, Classes resume March 30  
 Monday, Memorial Day

### **COMMUNICATION**

- Parents/students are responsible for informing the school if the student will be absent.
- Parents/students should check the bulletin board for any notices. Parents who do not come into the studio for child pickup may not be aware of important information.
- EMAIL:** Most communication from the studio will be through email. Please make sure to give your email address to the front desk. We will mail important notices to those parents who do not have email.

### **FUND RAISING**

WDA's fund raising events benefit **International Ballet Exchange (IBE)**, our non-profit organization. It is **IBE** that sponsors our annual *Nutcracker*, with the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine. **IBE** also has a partnership with the School District of Philadelphia, providing a ballet residency program at Simon Gratz High School and Anna B. Pratt Elementary School with classical ballet training over 36 weeks. **IBE** provides free and reduced rate performances for school children and communities throughout the Philadelphia area.

Our WDA families help in many ways:

- Sally Foster Wrapping paper sales: Your purchase of wrapping paper and gifts is a great help. IBE gets 50% of the sales. Packets will go home the second week of classes. Your purchases will arrive at the studio before Thanksgiving
- Ad book Sales: We will be selling ads for the *Nutcracker* Program booklet beginning in the fall. You can help by placing an ad or asking a local merchant to place an ad.
- Merchandise Sales: We will be selling giftware, flowers, refreshments, t shirts, etc. at the *Nutcracker* and spring recital. Your purchases will help us fund our programs
- Ticket Sales: We have hired a professional ballet company of 20 dancers from Ukraine to perform with our children in *The Nutcracker*. Our expenses in paying the company, and production related expenses are covered only in part by our ticket sales. **We need you** to come, bring your children, bring your friends, to support this production.