

artsUMBRELLA™

DANCE NEWSLETTER



Photo by Michael Slobodian

Dear Dancers, Parents and Friends,

Soon we will be making dance assessment letters available for all parents of the general dance program. The decision to implement assessments in the dance program is based on our desire to encourage dialogue between the teacher and the parents of young dancers.

There is one phrase I hear repeated numerous times in my many conversations with the parents of dancers in our program: "I don't know dance...". When I hear this, I very quickly interrupt with "you don't need to know dance you just need to know what is good education!"

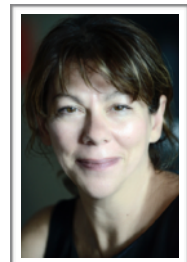
As dance has a history of tradition and a methodology that can feel foreign to some parents, we wish to begin the conversation about what the program has to offer young people in their physical and intellectual development.

It is the ideas and principles that live within the form of dance that make its study valuable for young people. And it is our wish for all the dancers in the program to graduate from Arts Umbrella with a sense of personal achievement, discipline and the tools they need for future success wherever life may take them.

Sincerely,

Artemis Gordon

Artemis Gordon
Artistic Director
Arts Umbrella Dance



Alumni Profile by Beatrice Larrivee



Photo Michael Slobodian

Congratulations Beatrice for receiving a contract with Rubberbandance!

In September 2013, 17-year-old Beatrice Larrivee moved to Vancouver from her hometown of Montreal to attend Arts Umbrella's dance program. After graduating from our Post-Secondary Diploma Program in June 2016, Beatrice took off on her emerging career path and after just a few short summer months, was invited to join Rubberbandance. We couldn't wait to catch up with Beatrice this fall to hear about her journey so far:

Springboard [in Montreal] was an opportunity for me to stay myself and to put in context everything I learned throughout the years at Arts Umbrella.

Auditioning is always challenging - a day of audition is hard, three weeks of it is unbelievably difficult. I underestimated the preparation I needed for those three weeks.

Springboard is like a community in itself: you enter it and you feel like everybody already knows each other and that puts you out of your comfort zone. I learned a lot from everyone I worked with. I wrote a lot that week, and when I read it now, I'm amazed that I was able to sustain that much information in such a short time. I can't tell you enough how thankful I am for the education that I received at Arts Umbrella. I don't think I would be half of the dancer I am today without it. I'm able to research so much deeper and to produce so much more. I worked a lot with Rubberbandance during this time. I got an email a week after Springboard asking me to join the company as a trainee for the 2016-2017 season.

A couple of weeks later, I was in the Marie Chouinard's studio doing the one week Intensive. The first class started by talking about our roots and about how we are able to be because of them. I am so grateful and proud to say that my roots are at Arts Umbrella, that I first came to Arts Umbrella and together we stripped down all the bad thinking in me, all of what I thought was right or wrong, what was beautiful or ugly. I cannot even believe that I've become someone able to critique, to listen with an open mind, to push myself past my limits every day.

After this, I was in Chicago co-creating a piece with someone I met at Springboard for a workshop supported by Visceral Dance Chicago and River North. This choreographer will also be creating a solo piece on me for a performance next April which will present different Montreal artists.

I started with Rubberbandance the second week of September. It's unbelievable how much I have to take upon myself. When you are in a company nobody is telling you what to learn, when to work and how to work. You have to be your own leader, your own teacher. You cannot wait for anyone to tell you how much work you need to do.

I lose myself in my artistry every day and that is the greatest thing in the whole world. I am so lucky to be part of something bigger than me. The challenge about being a part of something bigger than you is to not let it discourage you, and instead let it inspire you to do greater things than you think you are capable of.

Parent Survey Feedback Responses

Thank you to all of you who participated in the 2015/16 Parent Survey. Your feedback was incredibly helpful for the dance administration team and will help to guide the choices and decisions we make for the rest of this year and in the planning of the 2017/18 year.

Some of your comments came up multiple times so we would like to offer some general responses in return:

1) **"The Teen Intensive Program schedule and caliber is too intense/not intense enough."**

"We wish there were more performance opportunities for the TIP dancers, like the Arts Umbrella Dance Company for Professional Program dancers."

We have put considerable thought into our Teen Intensive Program and how we can create programming that suits both serious dancers in full-day school programs, as well as accommodating dancers who prefer to come to dance after school for fun, in addition to other after school activities. As a result, we will be working towards a new structure for our program in 2017/18 called the Afternoon Intensive Program (AIP). Here is how the two new programs will be set up:

Teen Program (TIP):

After school program consisting of 2 days and 4 classes per week.

Classes are open to Grade 8 to 12.

Program exceptions optional (i.e. taking only 1 day per week).

No audition required.

Afternoon Intensive Program (AIP):

After school program consisting of 3 to 4 days, 6 to 8 classes per week.

Program will include a Repertoire Company, with rehearsals during weekly repertoire class, that will performing 3 or more times per year.

The program will consist of 3 levels: Elementary (Grades 8-9), Intermediate (Grades 9-10), Senior (Grades 11-12).

Program exceptions will not be considered. This is in order to maintain the commitment and skill-level required for all dancers to be a part of the repertoire company.

Audition required in April.

With this change in programming, we will be re-introducing Level 6 and 7 for Grades 6 and 7. Level 6 and 7 will consist of 2 days, 4 classes per week. Pre-Elementary 1 and 2 programming will remain consistent with past years.

2) **"Classes seem too full or overenrolled"**

"Registration was stressful, I was worried my child would not get a space in the program."

In an effort to accommodate all returning dancers' enrolment, some levels have had higher than expected enrolment levels by the time September has come along. In the 2017/18 year we will make the following changes to alleviate this dilemma:

In advance of registration, the dance administration team will request Intent to Return forms for all levels. By returning this form, you will save your child a seat in the upcoming year until a specified date (tbc).

We will be working towards an earlier registration date, prior to recital. If we are successful in this plan, we will send specific dates out via email. By opening registration earlier, we will be able to more effectively respond to enrolment levels and necessary programming alterations in advance of September.

We will be working towards offering registration over the phone and/or online to eliminate the need for in person registration. We will likely keep in person registration as well, for parents who would like to consult with teachers/staff before registration

Parent Survey Feedback Responses *continued...*

3) "The website does not have the information I need/information is hard to find"

In advance of registration, we will be fleshing out the information available on our website for use as a registration resource. In addition, we will be creating a Current Student Intranet on our website. It will likely consist of one page, available by private link only (to be sent out to all parents and dancers). It will include up to date weekly/yearly schedules, all memos that are currently just sent via email, parent and student handbooks, past newsletters, and anything else that comes up.

By keeping all information in one place, we hope to alleviate the scramble to recall recent updates. We also encourage you to read the Contact Information in this newsletter and feel free to contact any member of the dance staff at any time with questions, comments, and concerns.

4) "The buildings need updating and more space, it is inconvenient to be in two locations."

Everyone at Arts Umbrella agrees with you! Behind the scenes, the administration at Arts Umbrella is working diligently towards securing a new, bigger building to accommodate Arts Umbrella's recent and future growth. We hope this major move will happen within 1-2 years. When you begin to hear about the capital campaign to raise funds for a new building, we hope you will consider a gift in support of this exciting goal.

In the meantime, we appreciate your patience while we work with the buildings and space that we have. We are happy to say that early this month, our roof was completely replaced and we should not expect any more leaks for the foreseeable future.



Photo by David Cooper

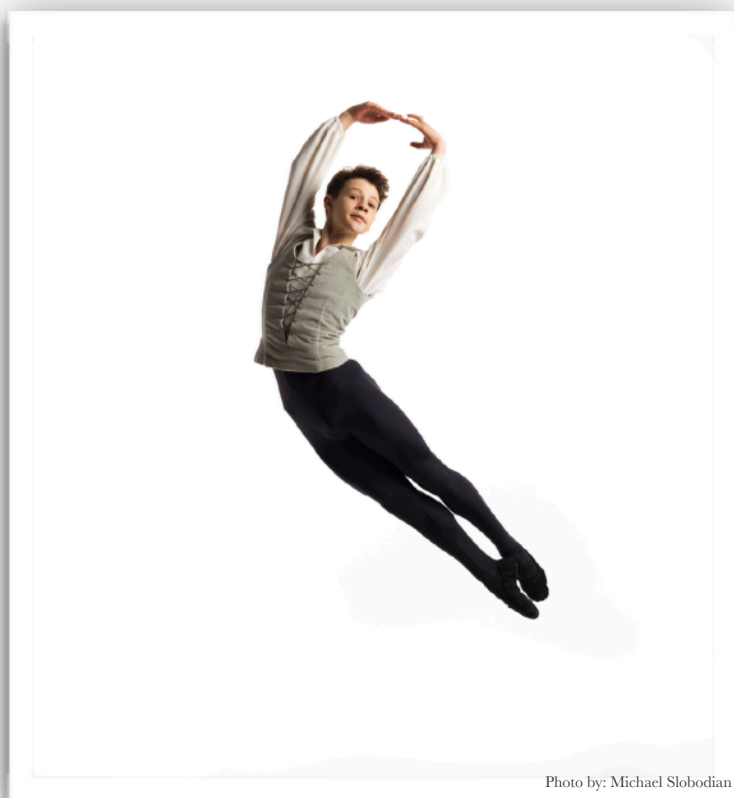


Photo by: Michael Slobodian

Important Dates

January 23-January 28
Winter Parent Viewing Week & Optional Parent/
Teacher Meetings

February 13
Family Day-AU Closed

February 29-March 5:
Winter Open House/Parent Viewing Week

March 13-March 26
March Break

April 14-April 17
Easter Weekend – AU Closed on Friday/Monday

May 22
Victoria Day – AU Closed

Season Finale:
May 25-27
Vancouver Playhouse

Recital:
June 15-18 (end of Regular Classes)
Vancouver Playhouse

June 26-June 30
Cecchetti Exam Week: exact dates TBA

Summer Dance Intensives:

July 24 - 28 and July 31 - August 4: Junior Summer
Dance Intensives (JSDI)

July 24 - 28 Surrey Summer Dance Intensive (SSDI)

July 31 - August 3: Teen Summer Dance Intensive
(TSDI)

August 7 - 25: International Summer Dance
Intensive (ISDI)

*Please note: registration forms are not yet
available*

Sunday Performance Series



Photo by Michael Slobodian

Arts Umbrella Dance Company performs new and innovative works-in-progress by leading Canadian choreographers alongside featured special guest artists.

Seats are limited.

Suggested Donations at the door: \$10 adults, \$5 children 5 and up.

Dates and Locations:

February 19 | 3:30PM

Ferris Studio at The Dance Centre (677 Davie St)

March 5 | 3:30PM

Performance Works (1218 Cartwright Street)

April 9 | 3:30PM

Roundhouse Community Centre (181 Roundhouse Mews)

Dance Staff Directory:

Communication is key as we try to guide dancers and parents through their many years at Arts Umbrella. It is important to us that we have an open dialogue about the many aspects of our school from the day to day schedule to the greater vision and purpose of dance education at Arts Umbrella.

Please connect with dance faculty and administration as much as needed. You can always call the front desk at Arts Umbrella or email dance@artsumbrella.com to be directed to the best person with which to speak. Alternatively, you can contact us directly!

Jeremy Orsted - Assistant, Dance Programming
jorsted@artsumbrella.com

Jeremy is the go-to contact for the General Dance Program, taking over from Katrina Cruickshank who now focuses on teaching. Jeremy can answer questions about:

- General Program - all questions and concerns including:
- Schedule
- Calendar
- Performances
- Contacting faculty members
- Auditions and Admission Processes
- Professional Dance Program and SPARTS Program
- AUDC Performances

Geneva Perkins - Assistant, Production
gperkins@artsumbrella.com

Geneva has taken over Caroline Kirkpatrick Fontaine's role while Caroline is away on maternity leave. Geneva can answer question about:

- Schedules (General, Professional, Grad, AUDC)
- Scheduling time to speak with Artemis Gordon, Artistic Director
- Studio maintenance

Sally Hart - Manager, Dance Operations
shdhart@artsumbrella.com

Sally oversees the administration of the Arts Umbrella Dance programs and can answer questions about:

- Programming and curriculum
- Program-parent communications
- Student assessment program
- Recital processes

Marilyn Seki - Registration Specialist
mseki@artsumbrella.com

Marilyn is the point-of-contact for registration in all Dance programs. Marilyn can answer questions about:

- Tuition and fees
- Bursaries and scholarships
- Registration and withdrawals

Dance Absences
danceabsence@gmail.com

In the event you will be absent from class, please send an email to Dance Absence including the dancer name, level, teacher, class time, and reason for the absence. This account is monitored once daily and emails will be forwarded to the appropriate faculty.

Artemis Gordon - Artistic Director, Dance
agordon@artsumbrella.com

Artemis Gordon is the director of all dance programs at Arts Umbrella. Please contact her for information about the greater vision and purpose of dance education at Arts Umbrella. With 25 years of experience directing and guiding this program, she is happy to discuss and answer questions and concerns that may arise.