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***MMB Handbook  
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## *History of the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet*

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet, formerly known as the Madison Civic Ballet, was founded in 1992 and has been a dynamic force in enriching the cultural community of central Mississippi. Jennifer Beasley has been the company's Artistic Director for the past 24 years and under her direction MMB has grown into a company dedicated to providing both excellence in classical ballet training and opportunities for young dancers in the metro Jackson area. As the company's Executive Director from 2011-2017 and currently Artistic Associate, Crystal Allen Skelton has fostered dedication to the company's mission and helped to achieve artistic excellence in the Jackson area. Janet Shearer joined the staff of the company as Executive Director in the fall of 2017, bringing extensive experience in volunteer management and a passion for the performing arts and arts education to the position.

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet presents a full production of *The Nutcracker* each December with a cast of over 100 dancers, as well as a Spring Gala in March. The Spring Gala showcases a repertoire of classical and contemporary ballets. Full length ballets performed by the company have included *Coppelia*, *Cinderella*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Firebird*, and excerpts from *Swan Lake* and *Don Quixote*. Guest artists with the company have included Joseph Gatti, 2006 USA IBC Bronze Medalist, and his partner, 2006 USA IBC Finalist Adiaris Almeida; Louisville Ballet Principal Dancers Mariano Albano and Christy Corbitt-Miller; San Francisco Ballet Principal Dancer Molly Smolen; American Ballet Theatre Dancers Meaghan Hinkis and Joseph Phillips; and Orlando Ballet Principal Dancer Katia Garza. MMB has collaborated with both the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and the Lima, Ohio Symphony as guest artists. The company has been the guest artist of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra on numerous occasions and in 2004 was invited to perform with the Lima Symphony Orchestra in Lima, Ohio. MMB's outreach program has grown to reach over 1,500 students annually in areas underserved by the arts.

MMB hosts an annual Summer Intensive which challenges the company by working with master teachers and choreographers from around the world. Company members have also been accepted and awarded scholarships for summer study at numerous workshops nationwide. In 2002, MMB was honored to have the only competitor in the USA International Ballet Competition in Jackson in over a decade who lived and trained in the state of Mississippi. Many MMB alumni are dancing professionally and in college programs across the United States.

The Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet was accepted into the Southeast Regional Ballet Association (SERBA) in 2008. MMB is the only company in the state of Mississippi that is a member of this prestigious organization. The acceptance of the company into Regional Dance America/Southeast was a definite milestone in MMB's development, elevating the company to a higher plateau of endeavor. Affiliation with this dynamic organization has provided positive experiences for the dancers and directors, raising their levels of self-expectation, and has expanded their awareness of the dance world.

MMB was honored to be selected as the Regional Dance America/Southeast host for the 2013 festival. This marked the first time for the event to be hosted in the City of Jackson in 30 years. The RDA/SE festival is an annual conference where more than 750 dancers and instructors from the southeastern region of the United States come together, providing education, audition opportunities, and performances. The RDA/SE Festival provides arts education and outreach, promotes cultural enrichment and awareness of the art of ballet, and supports cultural tourism. MMB being distinguished to host the RDA/SE festival signifies that MMB has a commitment to quality programs, artistic excellence and enriches students' lives through ballet.

## **MMDA/MMB Philosophy**

The process of learning to dance is one of both intellectual understanding and physical accomplishment. Movement is learned through repetition until the body builds what we call “Muscle Memory.” The muscle memory is what allows us to perform familiar but somewhat complex tasks like brushing our teeth without the brain sending a separate and specific instruction for each movement: “extend arm-open fingers-close fingers around toothbrush-pull hands to mouth-move hand to the right-move hand to the left, etc.” Our lives are filled with many such sets of movements and actions for which we have developed muscle memory.

In the first years of ballet study, when every step and position is new, we begin by building on the natural movements and rhythms of childhood play such as bending, stretching, walking, jumping, swaying, and spinning. Under the guidance of our instructors, students then learn new positions and movements-repeating and refining them until each becomes part of the body’s muscle memory. Because the positions and movements of classical ballet are so complex and precise, this process takes years of study.

Progress at MMDA/MMB is not defined by the accomplishment of one class or even one year of study. Our goal is to enable each student to reach his/her highest potential. We envision each student as having a unique chronology of progress that begins with the first class and continues until he/she stops dancing, at whatever age and level that might be.

Learning happens at different rates. There will be times when quick progress is made and other times when plateaus are reached when the mind and body assimilate recent learning and prepare for future growth. Instruction at MMDA/MMB is individualized to best encourage and facilitate each student’s development. Advancement through the levels in MMB is not based on length of study but on technical accomplishment, artistic development, emotional maturity, classroom interaction, personal work ethic and readiness for the challenges of the next level.

Being a dancer is not only a physical activity – it is a state of mind. The longer one studies, the more each of the attributes is developed. The gifts of ballet training forever enrich who we are and remain with us throughout our lives.

## *Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet (2021-2022 Season)*

August 16	MMDA Reservoir Classes Begin
August 21	Parent Meeting-Mandatory for all new MMB Company members
August 23	MMDA Madison Classes Begin
August 28	Company Saturday Practices Begin/"The Nutcracker" Auditions
September 6	Labor Day Holiday-No MMDA Classes
September 15	MMB Payment Due
October 15	MMB Payment Due
November 15	MMB Payment Due
November 18 (tentative)	Outreach School Performances **selected dancers only
November 20	Nutcracker Rehearsal Day- <b>Mandatory</b>
November 21-27	Thanksgiving Holidays-No Classes
November 28	Nutcracker Rehearsal Day- <b>Mandatory</b>
December 5	Madison Parade
December 3 & 4	Dress Rehearsals- Jackson Academy- <b>Mandatory</b>
December 4 & 5	Nutcracker Performances
December 22 -January 4	Christmas Holidays-No MMDA Classes
January 5	Second Semester Classes Begin
January 15	RDA payments Due
February 15	Final MMB Payment Due
March 12	Spring Performance Rehearsal Day
March 14-18	Spring Break-No Classes
March 20	Spring Performance Rehearsal Day- <b>Mandatory</b>
April 18	Easter Monday- No Classes
May 5-7	RDA Festival Daytona, Fl.
May 20, 21, 23	MMDA Recital Rehearsals
May 21,22,24	MMDA Recitals
August 2021	Intensive with -Mandatory for Juniors and above

\*Spring Performance and Summer Intensive Dates - TBA

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# Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet 2021-2022

## Soloists (6)

### **Eleanora Ellis**

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### **Hart Maley**

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### **Sydney Sanders**

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**Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet  
2021-2022**

**Principal Dancer (2)**

**Brelyn Binkley**

Amber Binkley

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**Madeline Page**

Audrey and Jeremy Page

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## Manners for Dance Students

- **Students show respect for others by:**
  - Keeping their hands to themselves during class
  - Waiting quietly for others to have a turn and for instructions from the teacher
  - If you are late to class, wait for the music to finish and ask your teacher respectfully to enter class
  - Respecting items that belong to others
- **Students show respect for their teacher and art form they are learning by:**
  - Being on time for class
  - Being dressed properly
  - Listening when the teacher is speaking
  - Never hanging on the barres
  - Asking before leaving the room for any reason
  - Always finishing every exercise - never walking off noisily or showing anger or aggravation
  - Not talking in class
- **Dancers show respect to the studio by:**
  - Never running in the classroom or hallways
  - Never leaving water bottles outside of class
  - Not having gum or candy in the studio
  - Putting trash in its proper place
  - Keeping belongings inside their dance bags so items are not lost or left at the studio
  - Not leaving your bag overnight in the cubbies
  - If you must bring your dinner to the studio you must eat outside and place any food in the outside trash can
- **Parents show respect for the dance class, teacher, and studio by:**
  - Making every effort to get children to class on time and picking them up promptly after class
  - Making sure the children have the opportunity to use the restroom before class
  - Clearly marking dance shoes and all items with your child's name
  - Allowing the teacher to appropriately discipline your child when s/he disrupts class

**Expected Ballet Class Etiquette:** After every class it is proper etiquette to thank your teacher with a bow and to also personally walk up to your teacher to say “thank you.” This will make both the teacher and student end class on a positive note.



### **Ways for Parents to be involved in the dance education of their child:**

1. Buy tickets to MMB Company performances – The Nutcracker in December and the annual spring performance. This broadens your child’s understanding of the arts as a whole.
2. Encourage your child to read age appropriate biographies of dancers and study the history of dance.
3. Expose your child to musical training through the study of music in school, singing in a chorus, playing a musical instrument, and listening to all musical styles.
4. Allow your child to attend master classes offered periodically at the studio.
5. Become aware of good eating habits and nutrition.
6. Observe the practice of good body conditioning and flexibility to avoid dance injuries. Encourage stretching and exercises at home that benefit aerobic conditioning, i.e. swimming, biking, jumping rope, Pilates.
7. Allow your child to follow his/her heart, talent, and interests.
8. Remember that MMB wants to train and develop your child to the highest caliber while nurturing the individual to become a creative artist.

### **The Benefits of ballet training extend far beyond the mastery of steps and positions. Classical ballet training also helps develop:**

- Beautifully-sculpted, strong, articulate, and flexible bodies
- The joy of expressing oneself through movement
- Commitment
- Determination
- An appreciation for the arts – as a performer and as an audience member
- Patience
- Attention to detail
- Self-discipline
- The ability to set and achieve goals in the quest for excellence

## Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Board of Directors 2021-2022

**Officers:** Dale Shearer, President; Lisa Kirkpatrick, Vice-President; Jordan Richter, Treasurer; Hazel McCaughan, Secretary; Christine Bridges, Guild President; Alese Jones, Past President

**Members At Large:** Ashley Bach, Elizabeth Clark, Danielle Correro, Olivia Maley, Elizabeth Post, and Edwina Thomas.

**Artistic Director:** Jennifer Beasley

**Artistic Associate:** Crystal Skelton

**Executive Director:** Janet Shearer

**Advisory Member:** Jeff LeDuff, Stacie LeDuff, Jennifer Kealhofer, Charlotte Seals, and Dorthy Young

### *The Mission of the Company is:*

- To foster interest in classical ballet
- To provide excellence in dance training
- To offer serious dancers an opportunity to perform regularly
- To provide programs of the highest artistic quality for the Metro Jackson area.

### **Functions of the Board of Directors**

1. To make the mission of the Company become **reality**.
2. Select and employ Artistic Director and assistants as needed.
3. Oversee the financial operations of the Company.
4. Insure the financial stability of the Company and protect our non-profit status.
5. Secure funding for Company operations.  
Revenue for this comes primarily from Company dues. Some of the MMB expenses are rental of rehearsal space, rental of storage space, salary for Artistic Director, Executive Director and Assistants, payroll taxes, liability insurance, utilities and choreography. Estimated expenses for 2021-2022 are approximately \$248,000.
6. Secure funding for Company performances.  
Revenue for each performance comes from Corporate Sponsorships, Donations, Grants, Guild Fundraising, and ticket sales. Each performance has a separate budget. The average budget for most performances ranges from \$30,000-\$40,000.  
Recent actual expenses were as follows: 2019 *Nutcracker* \$39,274. 2019 *Spring Performance Of "Alice in Wonderland"* \$47,013 and 2019 RDA/SE \$10,761.
7. Plan the performing Calendar for the year.
8. Secure facilities for rehearsals and performances.
9. Oversee publicity and marketing of the Company so as to reflect a positive image within the community.
10. Appoint the Guild president and oversee the functions of the MMB Guild.
11. Mediate disputes and oversee any disciplinary action needed among Company members, parents and staff.
12. Develop a vision for the future of the Company.

# MMB Company Rules and Policies

## Membership

1. Dancers are accepted into the Company after open auditions during MMDA Summer Workshop. The auditions are conducted by impartial dance experts from outside the community.
2. Company members may not perform, teach or take classes with any other Ballet or Dance Company or School unless permission is given by the Artistic Director.
3. Should a dancer withdraw or be dismissed from the Company for any reason, he or she must advise the Director. Re-admission will be given only with the approval of the Artistic Director. Dancers are responsible for annual dues even if withdrawing in the middle of the year.
4. Dancers are prohibited from putting any of MMB choreography on You Tube, Facebook, or similar sites for copyright purposes.
5. Company Members' accounts should remain in good standing.
  - Company Dues are \$650 and owed even if the Dancers withdraw during the year.
  - Dancers who attend the Regional Dance America/Southeast festival will have additional expenses. RDA/SE festival is required for Senior Company, Soloists, and Principal dancers.
  - Payments for Company Dues and RDA/SE are separate. Those dancers attending the RDA/SE Festival will need to make a separate payment for RDA/SE on 1/15/21 for their kit fee.
  - Company dues are \$650 for the year. Parents have the option of paying dues in full up front by check, cash or money order in the amount of \$625 with a \$25 discount at the August Company meeting OR total dues will be divided into 4 equal payments of \$162.50. If choosing the 4 payments option, parents must sign a draft form so funds can automatically be withdrawn from their accounts on the 4 designated payment days of 9/15/21, 10/15/21, 11/15/21, and 2/15/22.  
**NOTE: For any payments drafted that do not go through due to Not Sufficient Funds, a \$20 draft fee will be charged!** At the end of our 2022 year, all dancer accounts will be reviewed. Dancer accounts with credit balances under \$25 will be written off and will be considered gifts to MMB. Dancer accounts with \$25 and more will be rolled over to next year's dancer account unless the dancer is a graduating Senior (12th grader) or if dancer is not returning to Company. If graduating seniors and dancers who are not returning the following year would like to receive a check of their remaining credit balance, they must request it in writing.
  - For those attending RDA/SE Festival, fees have yet to be determined but will be communicated to you as soon as the finalized number becomes available. RDA/SE Festival fees will be paid by check, cash, or money order on or before 1/15/22. Festival fees must be paid prior to a dancer being registered for festival. RDA/SE travel and hotel fees will be paid by check, cash, or money order. Travel fees are typically due in March. Hotel fees are typically due in April.
  - **Dancers with an outstanding balance will not be cast in upcoming productions.**
6. **Company Dues are separate from monthly MMDA class tuition.**
  - Company Fees fund our MMB.
  - Your Class Tuition funds our MMDA.
  - Questions or concerns should be immediately directed to any member of our Board of Directors.

## Parental Support

Parents of Company members are expected to participate in all functions of the Ballet Company and the Ballet Guild. This includes the Guild fees (\$50 per family and included in dues) and volunteer efforts that are necessary for the ballet to function.

## Responsibilities of Dancers

1. Company Classes and Rehearsals are held every Saturday at the MMDA Madison studio. Class will be held for Junior Alternates and Apprentice Company 9:30-11:00. These times may vary as we approach performances but students/parents will always be notified of any changes.
2. Academy Classes - Company Members are required to attend weekly classes in ADDITION to Company class and rehearsals. Required classes are as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> year Apprentice: 1 ballet, 1 jazz (2 ballet classes recommended but not required)*
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Apprentice: 2 ballet, 1 jazz*
  - Junior Company: 3 ballet, prepointe or pointe, 1 jazz, contemporary recommended but not required*
  - Soloists/Senior/Sr. Alternate Company: 2 ballet, 1 pointe class, 1 jazz*
3. Rehearsals - Dancers are responsible for keeping themselves informed of times and places of classes, rehearsals, and performances. All rehearsal information will be posted weekly on the bulletin boards at the Madison and Reservoir MMDA studios and e-mailed to you each week. Rehearsal schedules are subject to change. Please check email daily for any revisions. **ALL Technical and Dress Rehearsals are Mandatory. NO EXCEPTIONS!**
4. Absences - Dancers must be punctual for all classes, rehearsals and performances as scheduled unless previously excused.

### Saturday Class and Rehearsal Absences

- Apprentice and junior dancers having more than two unexcused Saturday classes/rehearsals per semester will not perform in the upcoming production. Senior/Soloist/Principal dancers having more than three unexcused Saturday classes/rehearsals per semester will be disciplined at the discretion of the Artistic Director and Artistic Associate. Discipline may include removal from the production or a fine up to \$100 per absence beyond three. This includes any rehearsals called during the week.
- Soloists, Senior Company, and Senior Alternate dancers should be available for rehearsals on Tuesday 8:15 PM-9:00 PM, Wednesdays 8:00 PM-9:00 PM, and Thursdays 8:15 PM-9:00 PM.
- Junior Company dancers may also have rehearsals during the week if they are cast in roles with Senior Company Dancers.
- Absences for school (academic requirements, ACT), auditions (ballet summer intensives, scholarships, college programs), family emergency, and major illnesses will be considered excused.
- Students leaving Company Class/Rehearsal early will count as 1/2 day absence.
- The Artistic Director **MUST** be notified of any planned absences, excused or unexcused, with as much advance notice as possible, preferably two weeks or more. Please email absences to the Artistic Director and copy [jshearer@msmetroballer.com](mailto:jshearer@msmetroballer.com). Be sure to include dancer name, date, and time of absence and reason for absence. Texts of absences to the Artistic Director should be limited to emergency cases.
- Absences for Rehearsals will **NOT** be excused **TWO WEEKS PRIOR** to a major performance. **No excuses** will be accepted for the dates of **November 20, November 28-December 5, 2021**. Rehearsals will be held March 12 and March 20 which is the Saturday before Spring Break and the Sunday after IF our Spring performance is scheduled within the

two weeks after Spring Break. There will be no classes during Spring Break March 14-18, 2022. **Dancers performing at the RDA Festival will not be excused from any rehearsals during the period of April 21-May 4, 2022.**

- At any time if an emergency happens during a rehearsal or performance and the Artistic Director cannot be reached via phone, an email to the Artistic Director will suffice as an excuse.

#### **Absences for Academy Weekly Classes**

Dancers are expected to attend the required amount of classes during the week at the Academy. If a Senior Company member misses a class, they must make it in the Intermediate Ballet class at the Reservoir on Wednesday from 7:15-8:45 or the Intermediate Pointe Class on Tuesdays from 5:30-7:00.. Dancers who are consistently absent from class will not progress as desired.

5. Appearance - Dancers must be neatly groomed and maintain a healthy weight for each individual's physique.

- **Apprentices**– Leotard-BWP 024 color-lilac, Tights-Body Wrappers A45 or C45, Pink ballet shoes (same as they wear for MMDA class)  
**Juniors**- Bloch #8820-Black with MMB monogram (Monday), Tights-Body Wrappers A45 or C45 BAT (color-ballet pink), pink canvas ballet shoes.  
**Senior Alternates/Seniors & Soloists**- Bloch L8820 Black with MMB monogram Tights-Body Wrapper A45 or C45 BAT (ballet pink.), pink canvas ballet shoes, pink pointe shoes (if on pointe.)
- Male Dancers are required to wear a Plain white fitted T-shirt, black shorts, Black or White ballet shoes..
- Female Dancers should keep hair long enough for classical styles. Hair should be worn out of the face, off the neck and neatly secured in a bun.
- No jewelry may be worn in class except for small earrings.
- **NOTE: The above leotards are the Saturday dress code. Other leotards/colors are to be worn for weekly MMDA classes. Please refer to the MMDA dress code for those.**

6. Casting- The Directors or guest choreographer shall make all casting decisions and are responsible for all production matters. All decisions are Final and not up for discussion. Dancers should accept the roles assigned to them since they are assigned with consideration of level, specific capabilities, and requirements of the overall production. *\*\*It is recommended that dancers attend public performances of the Company, even when they are not a part of the cast. This will introduce them to future roles that they might fill, as well as give support to the company as a whole.*

7. Costumes: Dancers are expected to abide by the costume rules as outlined in the handbook.

8. Competition: Dancers will be chosen by the Director as needed for competition and are expected to abide by the competition rules as outlined in the handbook.

9. Summer Study: All Company Dancers are **required** to attend 2 weeks of MMDA summer dance workshop. **The 2022 MMDA Workshop is June-date TBA.** Dancers 11 and older are highly encouraged to attend other summer programs to improve their technique. When choosing additional summer dance programs please try not to choose those whose dates overlap with MMDA's Summer Intensive. Junior Company, Senior Alternates, Senior Company, and Soloists, are also required to attend the **week long workshop in August.**

- Attendance at **ALL 10 days** of Summer Workshop and **All 5 days of the August Workshop** is

mandatory for advancement within the MMB Company.

10. Behavior: Dancers are expected to maintain a positive and respectful attitude with the company members, teachers, and its Artistic Director. **The Artistic Director has the authority to suspend any dancer whose behavior causes a negative reflection on the ballet company.**

- Dancers *and* Parents are expected to maintain a positive, supportive attitude about all company performances, rehearsals, and other functions.
- Dancers must refrain from using inappropriate language during classes, rehearsals and especially while on stage during performances.
- Dancers are responsible for keeping the studio, rehearsal area, and break area CLEAN at all times. No food or drink is allowed in the studios.
- Senior dancers are encouraged to set a positive example for the younger dancers.
- **Dancers and parents will use social media responsibly. Any social media use or post that reflects negatively on the company or any member of the company will not be tolerated. No FaceTime use on cell phones is allowed in the dressing rooms. Please be cautious regarding images taken in the backstage areas.**
- ALL dancers should treat one another with respect!

11. **Regional Dance America/Southeast:** The annual Regional Dance America/Southeast Festival is normally held in the Spring somewhere in the southeastern U.S. In 2022 the RDA/SE Festival will be in Daytona, Florida from Thursday, May 5 through Saturday, May 7, 2022. **FOR RDA/SE FESTIVALS, MMB POLICY REQUIRES ALL SENIOR, SOLOIST, AND PRINCIPAL MMB DANCERS TO ATTEND EACH FESTIVAL.** This policy was approved by the MMB Board of Directors in order to allow MMB to meet its obligations as a member of RDA/SE. Kit fees are due January 15 of the festival year, and must be paid in full before a dancer will be officially registered for the RDA/SE festival. For those dancers and any others who subsequently commit and are in the piece selected for performance at RDA/SE festival, there will be no excused absences for RDA/SE festival. Those in the chosen piece who pull out and fail to attend the festival will not be able to audition for the Company in the future. In the event of any unforeseen emergency, the dancer will be responsible for any expenses incurred by MMB. Company dancers are responsible for their kit fee for the festival. The dancers will all have to miss 3 days of school: May 4 – May 6, 2022. All dancers must stay together as a group with the official chaperone.

## **MMB Dancer Commitment Contract**

- I will be in class with the proper attire, warmed up, and focused before class begins. I will take sole responsibility for being on time to all classes, rehearsals, and performances.
- I will come to class prepared. This includes completing any outside class assignments and rehearsals.
- I will respect the facility around me and take responsibility for lost or damaged property, as well as clean up after myself and behave appropriately at all times.
- I will only eat or drink in designated areas, only water is allowed in the studios.
- I will be focused during class. I will be supportive of my peers and participate fully for the duration of each class. I will maintain a consistently respectful attitude towards my peers, my instructor, MMDA/MMB administrators and the faculty.
- I will apply corrections and follow directions.
- I will commit to daily improvements in my work.
- I will take responsibility for, and contribute to, the success of each class.
- I will attend other arts performances in the area and broaden my understanding of the Arts as a whole.
- I will be persistent. I will strive for consistency in my class work by accepting setbacks and refocusing my energies.
- I will practice good behavior outside of the classroom.
- I will respect the judgment of the faculty regarding my progress in the curriculum.
- I will be respectful of different viewpoints, cultures, and lifestyles.
- I will honor my financial and volunteer obligations as outlined in the MMB handbook.
- I will abide by all company rules and policies as outlined in the MMB handbook.

**Please sign and submit this form electronically.**

**★ Retain this copy for your reference throughout the year.**

**Remember, you are a vital representative of the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet!**

**The Success of the Company begins with you!!**

**Total commitment and responsibility will be required of you.**

## Costume Rules and Policies

The costumes used for *Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet* performances are property of the *MMB Company* or are rented from other companies. Proper care of the costumes will insure our ability to provide our dancers with the best quality costumes possible. It is the responsibility of each dancer to treat with respect the garments that they are assigned to wear.

1. **No costume should be removed from the costume room or performance area** without permission of the Artistic Director or Costume Mistress. (*Do not bring your costume home between performances.*)
2. **No eating or drinking (other than water) while in costume.** Food and drinks should never be brought into the dressing areas as they may be accidentally spilled onto costumes. Appropriate areas and times will be provided for eating. As much as possible, please eat before coming to performances or dress rehearsals.
3. **Do not apply make-up or hair spray while in costume.** These items can damage fabrics and shorten the life of the costume.
4. **Be gentle to your costumes while putting it on and while wearing it.** Excessive tugging and stretching can tear seams and change the shape of the garment. Take care not to snag the costume (especially tulle skirts) while you are in it. Be careful to sit in a clean place. Bring a towel or blanket to sit on if necessary. It is best to spend as little time in the costume as necessary before going on stage.
5. **Do not remove any labels or strings from the inside of the costume.** Each costume is numbered. You will identify your costume by its number. We will not put names inside the costumes.
6. **Hang your costume and properly store its accessories** (headpieces, hairpieces, armbands, hats, wings, etc.) as soon as possible after each use.

**With your help, we can keep our costumes beautiful for each performance and for many years to come.**

*Thank you!*



## MMB Guild

Welcome to the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Company! There are exciting performances scheduled for the 2021-2022 season. However, these performances can come to life only with support of Parents and Families through the activities of the Guild.

- ★ **All Parents are required to join the Guild** and are welcome to ask the support of friends and neighbors.
- ★ **Guild Membership fee is \$50 annually** and is included in the MMB Company dues if the family has an MMB-Company dancer.
- ★ **All MMB Families are required to volunteer a minimum 35 hours of their time** during the dance year (September through May) to support the efforts of the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet. Those who don't meet the minimum requirements will be **assessed a fee of \$700** (or \$20 per hour for any hour not worked by the end of recital performances) to offset the expense of hiring workers to perform the tasks. Documentation of your hours will be managed through an online form. The link for the form will be sent via email.
- ★ **Participation in the Fall Fundraiser.** Selling a minimum of 20 raffle tickets per family for \$10 each is required for our Fall Fundraiser. Families are also required to sell/purchase at least two tickets for the Ballet & Barre-BQ fundraiser at \$15 each. Participation in the Fall Fundraiser is **mandatory** or your account will be assessed.
- ★ **Participation in the Silent Auction.** The silent auction will return this year in conjunction with *The Nutcracker*. The goal is to have an online component and for the auction to be bigger and better than ever, with fewer, more valuable prizes offered. Each family is required to contribute an item valued at \$50 or more. To increase the attraction of silent auction items, families are encouraged to cooperate with one another to obtain more valuable items. For example, a group of five families may contribute a spa experience valued at \$250. In lieu of contributing an item or coordinating with other families, you may contribute \$50 through the guild.
- ★ **A family member must work a fundraising event (tea party, VIP tour) for Nutcracker or Spring or volunteer for backstage duty at recital** unless special exemption is obtained from Guild President.
- ★ Due to the number of apprentice dancers, all apprentice moms are required to work at least one backstage shift for The Nutcracker or Spring Performance and one backstage shift for recital.
- ★ **Computer Communication**
  - ★ You'll need an email address that will be checked daily!
  - ★ You'll need the ability to read .pdf files. Adobe Acrobat reader is free and can be downloaded at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).
  - ★ You'll need the ability to read Microsoft Word documents.
  - ★ We will use the website [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com) and Google forms for committee sign up, for volunteer skills survey, and to sign up for specific volunteer duties.

## **MMB Guild Committee Descriptions**

### **Events/Barre BQ, Tea Parties – Nutcracker and Spring Performance**

- Events are critical fundraisers and important public relations events for the ballet. Plan and procure food for events, decorate space, lobby, entrance, and walkway, set tables, serve and clean up. Assist with procuring food and/or donations such as tea, lemonade, brownies, etc.
- Two tea parties are held in conjunction with Nutcracker. A single spring performance tea party or alternative (Princess Parade, Character Photo Op) will be held as proposed by the Guild and approved by the Board. If no spring tea party is held, an additional fundraising event separate from spring performance will be considered (Ballet, Blues and BBQ).

### **Tickets – Nutcracker and Spring Performance**

- On performance days, responsible for advance and box office ticket sales. Chair is responsible for maintenance of online ticket website (Tix).
- Committee will need to arrange for ticket sales to be available during performance rehearsal times.

### **Backstage Moms - Nutcracker, Spring Performance, Recital**

- Coordinate moms to be backstage/in dressing rooms with non-company, Apprentices, Jr. Alternates, and Jr. Company dancers during dress rehearsals and performances.
- Assist dancers with quick changes.
- Help ensure dressing-room policies and procedures (social media, camera use, food and drink, etc.) are followed and dancer privacy is respected.
- Maintain a supply of general first aid items to be used at dancer/parent discretion. These items may include over-the-counter pain relievers, band aids, antibiotic ointment, ace bandages, ice packs, Gatorade, Sprite, ginger ale, over-the-counter antacids, etc.

### **Hospitality/Ushers – Nutcracker, Spring Performance, and Recital**

- Take tickets, give programs, and seat guests at all performances.
- Seat guests at Tea Parties and assist with tea parties or spring performance event as needed (take tickets, direct guests).
- Be available to direct guests to restrooms and to answer questions.

### **School Performances - Spring Performances-Date TBA**

- Distribute school performance flyers to schools.
- Take reservations by phone and receive payment. Any cash payments should be documented and turned in to the MMB treasurer. Invoices/purchase orders should be paid directly to MMB. An accounting of total reservations/ticket sales should be provided to MMB Board.
- Be present on day of school performances to act a liaison and to help with arrival, seating and exiting of students. Hospitality committee will assist.

### **Cast Party/Appreciation**

- Providing food and beverage for dancers, directors and technical crew.
  - Nutcracker performance cast party, others as needed.
- Purchasing dancer's gift for Nutcracker cast party.
- Procure gifts for Guest Artists, Artistic Director, and faculty

## Costumes

- Responsible for care, cleaning, storage, repair and fitting of costumes.
- Simple sewing skills required for alterations.
- Anyone with sewing skills needed for costume construction.
- **Non-sewing jobs:** moving costumes to the dressing area, dressing dancers back stage, cleaning and storage of costumes after performances.

## Tech Crew

- **Moving:** Loading sets at storage, unload at performance venue, return sets to storage.
- **Sound & Lighting:** Running sound, spotlights, installing gels, cables and speakers.
- **Back Stage Crew:** Operate lights, sound, backdrops and props during rehearsals and performances.
- **Construction:** Build, paint, create or purchase any new props needed prior to performances.

## Publicity

- Works with the Artistic Director who handles press releases, performance posters, and television/radio appearances.
- Reserve space to hang all-weather signs/banners in Madison and Reservoir area.
- Call TV stations to get Artistic Director interviewed on morning or mid-day shows.
- Follow-up with newspapers after press release has been submitted.

### Correspondence/Performance Posters

- Organize the distribution of posters announcing performances to businesses.
- Write/mail thank you notes to Silent Auction donors and other contributors as needed. Supplies provided. Deadline for all thank-you notes is January 15. May include dancers in writing of thank you notes during rehearsals.

### Newsletter

- Work with Artistic Director to produce MMDA/MMB Newsletter.

### Historian

- Work with Artistic Director to document MMDA/MMB accomplishments, events, newspaper articles, etc.

### T-shirt Sales

- Coordinate Nutcracker and Spring performance t-shirt sales with the Artistic Director. Take orders, compile and distribute t-shirts to those ordering.

## Performance Fundraising

### Dancewear/Costume Consignment

- Dancewear – Collect consignment items and have items available for sale at designated times, i.e. Nutcracker week.
- Costumes - Man a booth (during tea parties) for selling past recital costumes on consignment.

### Gift Shop

- Shop for and order inventory. Price items and/or prepare price poster.
- Staff the gift shop for shoppers before/after performances and intermission
- Set up/Cleanup Gift shop

### Flowers

- Procure flowers from a wholesale source for pre-orders and walk-up sales.
- Take orders for bouquets to be given to dancers after the performances.
- Prepare bouquets. Be available to hand out the orders on recital days.

- Prepare bouquets for guest artists, lead roles & graduating seniors.

### **Concessions**

- Plan, procure and sell refreshments prior to and at intermission for all performances.
- Work in conjunction with Tea Party Committee to acquire food and drink donations from businesses.
- Ensure adequate supply of paper products – cups, coffee cups, plates, napkins, coffee supplies (creamer, sugar and artificial sweetener).
- Set up and clean up concessions area.

### **Nutcracker Slide Show**

- Approximately 6 weeks before Nutcracker, collect the sponsorships and prepare the PowerPoint Presentation. Each dancer has one slide as part of company membership to feature a photo and dancer biographical information. Photos should be school photos or high-quality/professional headshots.
- Coordinate playing slide show on lobby screens with JA staff during a dress rehearsal for proofing.
- Coordinate playing a slide show on lobby screens with JA staff for each Nutcracker performance.
- Maintain a spreadsheet with slide show sales and provide to Guild treasurer for distribution of dancer earnings. Each non-company slide and each additional family slide is valued at \$25. Each business slide/ad is valued at \$50. Dancers will earn \$25 for each business slide/ad sold. Dancers/parents are responsible for providing all slide information and photos by the stated deadline.
- **Be creative to prepare an interesting presentation.**

### **Silent Auction**

- Collect donations from Guild members. Acquire other donations as needed.
- Prepare display cards, bid sheets, signs directing guests to the auction and table arrangement. Determine winners, contact winners and explain where to pick up prizes and pay.
- Provide list of donations also goes to Correspondence Committee for writing thank you notes.
- Maintain spreadsheet with merchandise totals and dancer earnings. Provide spreadsheet to Guild treasurer for distribution of dancer earnings.
- MMB company dancers who solicit a silent auction donation that sells for \$50 or more will receive 25% of final sale price.
- Maintain list of businesses donating and dancer/family requesting donations from year to year. All members should refer to this list before soliciting a donation and honor existing dancer/business relationships.

## **Corporate Sponsorships**

### **Open to all**

- Work with Board of Directors to bring in Corporate Sponsorships.
- Identify businesses that will benefit from marketing to our dancers, families, and patrons or that have an interest in the performing arts. Corporate Sponsorship Package contains all necessary information.
- **This MUST be coordinated with Board of Directors/Executive Director!**

# *Special Notes for Apprentice and other New Parents*

Welcome! Your child is in for a new and exciting experience that s/he is not likely to get anywhere else. Our faculty is second to none, our studio is top-of-the-line and the productions are superior to any pre-professional ballet company in this region!

## **Responsibilities**

1. **Please familiarize yourself** with the MMB Handbook and the Nutcracker Notes section.
  - a. Direct specific questions to the chair of the committee (rather than Jennifer). Direct general questions to the Guild President or a board member. You may email questions to the Executive Director at [msmetroballer@gmail.com](mailto:msmetroballer@gmail.com).
2. **Backstage Moms**
  - a. Because there are so many girls changing, we can only use moms!
  - b. Job description is in handbook. Because of the number of apprentices, all apprentice moms are expected to help backstage.
  - c. There are 2 dress rehearsals and 3-4 performances for Nutcracker. For spring performance there are usually 2 dress rehearsals and 2 or more performances. We'll need several Apprentice moms to work backstage at each dress rehearsal and performance. (There will also be non-company moms working backstage during The Nutcracker.)
    - i. **FIRST** select the time you wish to watch the whole performance (with grandparents or friends)
    - ii. **NEXT** choose the performance you'd like to work backstage. You may sign up in Sign Up Genius when it is distributed via email.
3. **Hospitality (Ushering)**
  - a. Job description is in handbook. This is easy, fun, and **so necessary!** Great for new parents to become familiar with performances and procedures.
  - b. We'll need at least 8 people at each performance.

## *Nutcracker Notes*

*A hopefully helpful guide for new parents and dancers from those of us who have been there, done that, and yes, bought the t-shirt!*

### **TICKETS -**

- Tickets go on sale on October 1. The preferred method of ticket purchase is to visit our website – [www.msmetroballer.com](http://www.msmetroballer.com).
- Tea Party tickets, especially the Sunday afternoon performance, typically sell out quickly.
- ***Do parents have to buy a ticket to the performance(s)?*** Yes, everyone in the theater needs a ticket, except those volunteering for the performance.
  - **IMPORTANT:** You cannot come and *stand* around to watch during the performances because of our diligent Fire Marshalls! We have our MMB aprons for those who are working. If you don't have one on, you need to leave the performance area. So, if you are not listed as a worker for that performance, then buy a ticket. Please don't create an awkward situation by ignoring this rule! (I'm embarrassed just thinking about it!)

### **NUTCRACKER COSTUMES –**

- Nutcracker costumes are furnished by and are property of MMB.
- You are responsible for shoes, tights, and any other “accessories” that might be required and are not part of the standard costumes.

- Most roles require the pink tights and ballet slippers that are MMB Company dress code.
- **Soldiers** will need black ballet shoes (not jazz shoes), pink tights, and a black leotard to wear under the costume.
- **Angels and Gumdrops** need pink tights and pink ballet slippers.
- **Mice** wear grey tights and grey ballet slippers. The tights are part of the costume. You will need to supply a pair of slippers with the dancer's name written **INSIDE** the shoe. We will paint them grey so they all match. Please bring these to Jennifer no later Nov. 10.
- No jewelry or panties are allowed to be worn on stage. (Tights ARE ballet underwear.) Remember: No eating, gum chewing, or drinking in costume.
- Most costumes have hairpieces (flowers, hats, etc.) so everyone should bring lots of extra bobby pins to secure your head piece.
- *No costume is to leave the Performance Location without the Costume Mistress's permission!*

### **REHEARSALS, REHEARSALS AND MORE REHEARSALS!**

There will be Saturday rehearsals each week. However, keep in mind that these are subject to change as the production begins to take shape. **This is where your email address is absolutely essential!** Schedules will be emailed 1-2 week's worth at a time. As performance week grows closer, we will have longer rehearsals (known as "run-throughs") where the entire ballet is run from beginning to end. Jennifer is very considerate of our youngest performers and will allow them to leave as soon as they have danced their parts and received their notes. ("Notes" are adjustments, corrections and compliments!) Sometimes scenes are listed on the rehearsal schedules. Following is a breakdown of what parts are in which scenes. If a scene that your child is involved in is listed, they are expected to be at that rehearsal:

**Act 1, Party Scene:** Party Girls and Boys, Puppets, Dolls, Party Parents, Clara's Friends

**Act 1, Battle Scene:** Dolls, Soldiers, Soldier Bunny, Mice

**Opening of Act 2:** Angels, Gumdrops, Candy Canes

### **THINGS TO BRING – AND NOT TO BRING – TO REHEARSALS**

**BRING:** A blanket to sit on, schoolwork, makeup, lipstick, bobby pins, ballet shoes, tights, QUIET toys/games

- **DON'T BRING:** Expensive "toys", noisy activities
- **LABEL EVERYTHING!**
- You are responsible for keeping up with your things. MMB is not responsible for any of your personal items.

### **NUTCRACKER WEEK**

This is the week prior to the performances. We will meet in the Performance location and practice on the stage. **These rehearsals are mandatory.** A typical week might be similar to the below, but the actual detailed schedule will be emailed to you closer to performance time.

#### Monday through Wednesday

6:00 – 9:00 Rehearsals at the Madison Studio

#### Tea Party & Performance

Tickets for the Tea Parties are sold in advance and go very quickly. Food is served on brightly decorated tables for 10. There is a gift shop, a silent auction, cast member "meet and greet", door prizes and concessions. (There will also be a Costume Consignment where you can sell past costumes you no longer want to keep. Watch for more information.) At 2:00 the performance begins and the tea party will follow the performance this year. We will need some room mothers to keep an eye on things while they wait to perform.

Friday, Dress Rehearsals 5:30 PM-10:00 PM

Saturday, Dress Rehearsal 9:30 AM-12:30 PM

Saturday – 2:00 Performance and Tea Party to follow Performance

Saturday – 7:30PM Full Length Performance

Dancers in Act 1-Call time 6:30 Dancers in Act 2-Call time 7:30

Sunday – 2:00 Performance and Tea Party to Follow

Dancers in Act 1-Call time 1:00 Dancers in Act 2-Call time 2:00

Cast Party

All members of the cast will be treated to Cast Party where they will be offered sandwiches and goodies and receive nice thank you gifts for their hard work and dedication. (Food is provided for the dancers but parents are on their own!)

## MMB Company Dues/Fees Reference Sheet

- Company Dues are \$650 (a \$25 discount given if \$625 is paid in full at August MMB Company meeting).
- RDA/SE festival kit fees are estimated to be \$275 - \$300. **\*\*Only for dancers that will be participating in 2021 RDA/SE Festival-Senior, Soloists, and Principals. You will be given the exact amount by October 1, 2021.**
- Company dues may be paid in full on August 21, 2021. Please see the coupon page for instruction on payments in full.
- You will receive an invoice via email showing your balance due approximately 2 weeks before the due date.
- Earnings from fundraising activities will be distributed to you by the Guild treasurer.
  - Slide sale – Each dancer gets one slide; cost included in Company fees. Non-Company and family slides will be available for \$25. Business slides/ads will be available for \$50 of which the dancer will earn \$25.
  - Special 2022 RDA/SE Fundraiser – This fundraiser will be for dancers who are attending 2022 RDA/SE. The funds raised may be used to offset kit fees and hotel expenses.
- Company dues will be divided into 4 payments **if not paid IN FULL up front**. These payments **WILL BE DRAFTED** on 9/15/21, 10/15/21, 11/15/21, and 2/15/22. **For any payments that do not go through due to insufficient funds, a \$20 draft fee will be charged!**
  - **Company Dues – Full payment of \$650 in 4 equal draft payments (\$162.50 per payment) or \$625 paid in full at 2021 August Mandatory Company meeting.**
  - **2022 RDA/SE Festival Fees are due in January-1/15/22.**



**PAYMENT COUPONS**

**PAYMENT IN FULL ONLY!**

Keep this side for your records

**RETURN THIS SIDE WITH YOUR PAYMENT**

**MMB Dues/Fee Payment in Full**

**DUE ON August 29, 2021**

Date Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Ck# \_\_\_\_\_

Dancer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ \$625 \_\_\_\_\_ Check# \_\_\_\_\_

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Keep this side for your records

**RETURN THIS SIDE WITH YOUR PAYMENT**

**MMB SERBA Payment**

**DUE ON OR BEFORE January 15, 2022**

Date Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Ck# \_\_\_\_\_

Dancer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ Check# \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Payment in Full ONLY, Mail Company Fees to:**

**Harper, Rains, Knight, & Company  
c/o Tamara Jones  
1052 Highland Colony Parkway  
Suite 100  
Ridgeland, MS 39157**

**601-605-0722  
601-605-0733 (Fax)**



PERFORMANCES SCHOOL ABSENCE LETTER

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

From: Dale Shearer  
President, MMB Board of Directors  
Email: dshearer@cctb.com  
Work: 601-856-7200

RE: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The student(s) listed above are dancers with the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet. We are performing \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_.

As a result, these dancers will be absent from school. Please excuse their absence and allow them to make up any missed schoolwork. This is an excellent opportunity for them to reach out to our communities and bring the art of dance to other children. Please contact me if you have questions or need anything further.

**MMB/MMDA RDA/SE Parental Consent Form**

I/we give permission for my/our child to attend the following event:

**Event:** RDA/SE Festival

I/we understand that while on this MMB/MMDA-sponsored event, my/our child will be under the supervision of MMB/MMDA faculty/staff and other parent volunteers. I further understand that my child may be transported to and from the event via airplane or bus charter and may be transported in privately owned and rental vehicles driven by faculty/staff and volunteers. I/we hereby release MMB/MMDA, its agents, staff, faculty, employees and parent volunteers from any and all liability, and waive all claims, demands or actions against such parties, for any personal injury suffered by my/our child in connection with said activities, or any injury to property in connection with said activities.

I/WE HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS CONSENT FORM, CONSENT TO MY/OUR CHILD ATTENDING THIS EVENT, AND AGREE TO THE RELEASE AND WAIVER SET FORTH ABOVE.

AGREE TO THE RELEASE AND WAIVER SET FORTH ABOVE.

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Contact Information:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## RDA/SE Rules

The following list of rules is an excerpt from the RDA/SE Standard Operating Procedures. All companies and dancers are required to abide by these rules.

- Any dancer attending festival must be twelve (12) by the last day of the festival. A copy of a dancer's birth certificate must be included with the company's festival registration for any dancers twelve (12) years of age.
  - The Host Company can choose to allow dancers who are eleven (11) years of age.
- Dancers performing at Festival must be a minimum of thirteen years of age by the last day of Festival. A performer under the age of thirteen will be allowed to perform at Festival if she/he is performing a child's acting/pantomime role. If these performers are twelve by the last day of Festival they are eligible to purchase a full kit and participate in all of the Festival functions including class. Performers under the age of twelve by the last day of Festival may observe and/or attend other Festival functions if they purchase the appropriate kit.
- Each company must include one chaperone for every eight dancers under eighteen years old, not including the director. These chaperones will be required to purchase a full kit. All directors attending any portion of the Festival must buy a full kit.
- Any dancer who performs in any RDA/SE performance other than a professional company dancer or a professional guest artist must purchase a kit.
- All Festival attendees (performers, Directors, chaperones, dancers) other than those affiliated with the Host Company must book accommodations in the Host Company designated Hotel. In the event a "spillover" Hotel is needed, the Host Company will arrange another property and the same rules will apply. If a Company is in violation of this rule, a supplemental fee to offset the loss to the Host Company will be assessed in the amount of \$100 per kit, payable to the Host Company prior to the opening of Festival.
- Some form of cover-up must be worn over leotards by the dancers in hotel lobbies, elevators and between classes.
- No company member under eighteen years of age may be out of the hotel at night unless with his/her company group.
- Directors are asked to remind their dancers of theatre etiquette, such as not leaving their seats before the final curtain or the last curtain call.
- Dancers must be reminded to wear their badges to all classes and other festival functions.
- Directors and chaperones must impress upon their dancers the necessity of being on time for all classes and other activities.
- Dancers are expected to attend all classes and activities scheduled for them unless personally excused by their directors.

**The following are rules and guidelines approved and adopted by the MMB Board of Directors:**

- **If the RDA/SE festival is in a location not within easy driving distance of the Jackson metro area, i.e. more than 500 miles, and group travel is needed, all dancers and chaperones are required to travel with the MMB group. Any exceptions must be approved by the MMB Board of Directors. Any dancer or chaperone who makes their own travel arrangements will still be assessed the group travel fees.**

- Parents/Dancers are required to stay at the host hotel or specified alternate hotels. Hotel reservations will be made by Jennifer/designee. Group reservations are made by Jennifer/designee to get the group rate and for rooms to be charged to the MMB credit card.
- If personal vehicles are used for transportation, the passengers should contribute gas money to the driver.
- RDA/SE attendance is **mandatory** for all of the festival-Senior, Soloist, and Principal MMB Dancers. MMB does not require company dancers to attend any RDA national festival, because of the greater time and financial requirements of the national festivals. However, as part of the obligations of its membership in RDA/SE, MMB is required to attend and participate in RDA national festivals, which it has been able to do by careful management of resources and voluntary participation of dancers.
- Dancers are expected to be respectful to each other, their chaperones, and the RDA/SE faculty.
- Dancers will travel to/from classes and events in groups. Dancers should never go off alone.
- All parents attending RDA/SE will be expected to serve one time-slot as the official chaperone. This includes taking the dancers to class, verifying attendance, watching the class and making sure that the dancers make it to the next activity. Options for the time slot are morning, afternoon or evening
- SERBA chaperone fees will be divided among the dancers.

#### Miscellaneous Information:

- Prior to the festival, various forms will be emailed to you and must be returned to Jennifer or her designee. Forms are school absence form, RDA/SE merchandise order form, lunch order form, and permission/release forms. It is imperative that these forms are submitted in a timely manner.
- Performances are held Thursday through Saturday nights of the Festival. The Saturday night Gala is usually dressy attire. At RDA, performances are usually Tuesday through Saturday nights
- A themed event is held each night of the Festival following the performances. You will be notified as soon as possible with the theme so your dancer can bring appropriate clothes and accessories.
- Classes are typically scheduled 9:00 – 5:00 each day. A detailed schedule per age group will be sent prior to the Festival. The performances begin usually 7:30pm.
- Chaperones – as above, we are required to have 1 “official chaperone” per every 8 dancers. Official Chaperones pay a kit fee (cost divided among the dancers) which includes tickets to the performances and banquet. Official Chaperones are required to stay with their group of dancers during the classes/events. If enough parents attend, we try to divide the time you spend at the events among all of the parents.
  - Parents – be thinking about this and deciding if your schedule will permit you to travel. The other reason this is important is for room reservations. Rooms are assumed to be 4 people per room unless Jennifer/designee is notified otherwise.

# *Amazon.com Payback Program*



Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet has entered into special pay-back program with Amazon.com!

Everytime you shop at Amazon.com through the link on our website ([www.msmetroballet.com](http://www.msmetroballet.com)), MMB will receive a percentage of your purchase!

It is a super easy way to raise money to support the mission of the company; all you have to do is shop, shop, shop! And remember to tell all your family and friends to participate!

Remember to go to [www.msmetroballet.com](http://www.msmetroballet.com) and access Amazon.com through the link on our homepage. (This is the only way that MMB will receive the benefit.)

## **Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet COVID-19 Policy and Procedure**

### **Policy:**

The COVID-19 outbreak and the related public health needs have created a unique challenge to Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet (MMB). The company will take the following measures to help ensure the health and safety of MMB dancers, volunteers, board members, employees, donors and audience members while continuing to pursue our mission: to foster interest in classical ballet; to provide excellence in dance training; to offer serious dancers the opportunity to perform regularly; to provide programs of the highest artistic quality to the Metro Jackson area.

The company will monitor local, state and federal recommendations and mandates and respond with procedural changes in a timely manner. The artistic director and/or the executive director are authorized to make procedural changes as necessary to remain in compliance with recommendations. The board and any affected individuals will be notified of procedural changes by the directors as soon as possible.

The company will coordinate procedures as appropriate with those of Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy.

In an effort to reduce and prevent spread of COVID-19, the company will implement procedures and monitor compliance as appropriate in, but not limited to, the following practices: hand-washing/hand-sanitizing, social distancing, use of masks, monitoring of symptoms, isolation of symptomatic individuals and testing. The use of these practices by all involved individuals will be required, as appropriate, in settings such as classes/rehearsals, costume fittings, dress rehearsals, performances, fundraising events, tech crew work days, load-in/load-out and meetings, regardless of the individual's role in or the location of the activity.

While MMB is promoting and implementing safe practices according to the guidance from state and federal regulatory agencies, exposure to COVID-19 can still occur outside of MMB. MMB cannot control all exposure risks. It can only mitigate those risks related to MMB activities. Parents, dancers and guests are ultimately responsible for following MMB guidelines and helping to limit exposure risk.

### **General procedure:**

1. All individuals will wear a mask or face covering over the nose, mouth and chin in compliance with any applicable government mandate. Centers for Disease Control and state health department recommendations will be considered in decisions regarding mask requirements for dancers and other individuals. Any changes in mask requirements due to changes in recommendations from government authorities will be communicated as needed.

**\*\*At this time, due to the high level of community transmission related to the Delta variant, all individuals participating in indoor MMB activities are required to wear a mask.\*\***

2. All individuals will maintain social distance (maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and others) unless the activity in which they are involved prohibits them from doing so or unless they are fully vaccinated. Examples of activities where social distancing may not be possible

include rehearsal of certain choreography, costume fittings, execution of backstage mom duties in dressing rooms, and building sets. With the exception of dancers who are performing (see qualifications below), individuals in such situations must wear a face covering and practice hand-washing/hand-sanitizing. Individuals in such situations will limit, as much as possible, the amount of time in which they are not social distancing.

3. All individuals will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or use a hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) upon entering and exiting the building.

4. All individuals will be asked to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms daily using the screening questions below. Daily screening questions include:

- Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
- Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
- Have you had a new loss of taste or smell?
- Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?

Any person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will refrain from participating in MMB activities and will report symptoms to the executive director or the artistic director immediately. The individual will undergo COVID-19 testing and present a negative test result before returning to the studio and MMB activities.

Any individual failing the screening questions above will undergo COVID-19 testing and present a negative test result before returning to MMB activities.

5. Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or begins experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 within 48 hours of participating in an MMB activity will inform the executive director or the artistic director immediately. Such an individual will be expected to provide names of close contacts within MMB who may have been exposed. The Mississippi State Department of Health typically defines close contact as less than six feet, unmasked, for an accumulated fifteen minutes within a 24-hour period. The executive director will follow the current advice at the time from the Mississippi State Department of Health regarding the potential exposures and in contacting those potentially exposed.

6. Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, will refrain from reporting to the studio or from participating in any MMB activity until at least 10 days have passed from the onset of symptoms or from the positive test. The individual will be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to MMB activities.

7. All eligible individuals, especially dancers, are strongly encouraged to consider vaccination. Dancers who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide evidence of vaccination status by presenting their vaccination card may be eligible to discontinue mask use and social distancing. **\*\*At this time, due to the high level of community transmission related to the Delta variant, all individuals participating in indoor MMB activities are required to wear a mask.\*\***

**Procedure for Madison studio company class and rehearsal:**

1. Dancers and parents will follow the current carpool procedures as outlined by MMDA.



Dancers and parents should self-screen for fever and symptoms before reporting to the studio using the questions in General Procedure #4 above. Anyone registering a temperature of 99.5°F or higher or answering affirmatively to a screening question should not report to the studio and should contact the artistic and executive directors regarding the absence. Anyone not picked up in a timely manner at the end of class or rehearsal will continue to wear a mask and social distance under the portico or in the lobby until their transportation arrives.

2. The time dancers are in the building and not in class or rehearsal will be limited as much as possible. If possible, dancers should enter the building only when they are scheduled immediately for class or rehearsal. Dancers with a break lasting longer than one hour should be picked up and dropped off again for their next rehearsal.

3. Dancers will arrive dressed for rehearsal. Dancers may not use the dressing room unless given specific permission by the artistic director or other adult on duty.

4. Dancers will bring a clean, small bag containing only the necessary items for class and rehearsal.

5. Dancers are strongly discouraged from eating at the studio. If the dancer's schedule does not allow for leaving the studio for lunch, the dancer should eat outside, or if there is inclement weather, the dancer may eat in the smaller studio. Social distancing will be enforced whether dancers are eating outside or inside.

6. Dancers will bring a filled water bottle with a lid. The bottle will be labeled with the dancer's name. Water fountains and vending machines are closed.

7. Dancers will practice social distancing unless rehearsing choreography that requires closer spacing. The amount of time dancers spend rehearsing such choreography will be limited as much as possible while still achieving the level of performance expected.

8. A parent or other individual may enter the building only if they are volunteering or have other MMB business. All should self-screen for COVID-19, use hand sanitizer and wear a face covering if mandated or recommended at the time.

9. Any dancer or participating individual who becomes ill during class or rehearsal must notify the artistic director or adult on duty immediately. The individual will be isolated and must be picked up or leave the building as quickly as possible.

### **Procedure for theater**

**As the situation with COVID-19 fluctuates, MMB will adjust as necessary. The goal is to pursue the mission of the organization, which includes performing, as directly and safely as possible during these uncertain times.**

### **Organizational Responsibility**

The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring, to the best of her ability, that the policies and procedures of Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet related to COVID-19 will be followed

at the theater. The Executive Director will be assisted by the Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Guild Vice President and Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet Board of Directors, including Advisory Members. Any questions regarding the policy and procedure or any issues which arise should be directed to the Executive Director or the Guild Vice President.

The duty schedule for performance weekend and cell phone numbers of these individuals will be provided to volunteers and will be posted in appropriate areas throughout the facility. For each volunteer shift, a volunteer will be assigned to assist with COVID-19 related matters. If possible, this volunteer should be a healthcare professional familiar with COVID-19 policies and procedures.

## **Dancers, Volunteers, and Audience Members**

### **1. Screening**

- Dancers and volunteers should self-screen for fever and symptoms before reporting to the theater using the questions in General Procedure #4 above. Any dancer registering a temperature of 99.5°F or higher or answering affirmatively to a screening question should contact the artistic and executive directors immediately. Any volunteer registering a temperature of 99.5°F or higher or answering affirmatively to a screening question should contact the executive director and appropriate committee chairman regarding their volunteer shift.
- Dancers will enter the Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center (PAC) at the northeast entrance (backstage entrance) or at the gym, depending on dressing room assignment. Volunteers will enter at the northeast entrance (backstage entrance) and report to their assigned area. Safety notices will be posted prominently to assist in ensuring that symptomatic individuals do not enter the building. Anyone exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed entry.
- Ticket holders will be emailed prior to the performance to request that they self-screen for fever, COVID-19 exposure and symptoms before coming to the theater. Audience members will enter the building through the east entrance to the lobby. Safety notices will be posted prominently to assist in ensuring that symptomatic individuals do not enter the building. Anyone exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed entry.
- Any individual who develops symptoms while at the facility will be isolated and required to exit the premises as soon as possible.

### **2. Masks**

- Mask use at the theater will follow recommendations of government/health authorities at the time of the performance.
- The hospitality committee will be responsible for monitoring mask use by the audience. Backstage volunteers will monitor and correct, if needed, mask use by dancers.

### **3. Social distancing** (six feet of separation between individuals not in the same household)

- Dancers will be assigned to dressing rooms in a manner to allow for social distancing within the room. Guest artists will be assigned a dressing area and bathroom separate from members of the pre-professional company. All dancers will be expected to adhere to social distancing guidelines in the dressing room and backstage areas unless a necessary activity requires otherwise.
- Volunteer assignments will be made with social distancing guidelines in mind. All volunteers will be expected to adhere to social distancing guidelines unless the duty being performed requires otherwise. These situations will be limited as much as possible.
- Theater capacity will be limited in accordance with any applicable state or local mandate.
- The lobby area will be monitored by hospitality committee volunteers to ensure social distancing. Activities in the lobby will be limited as needed to allow adequate space for social distancing. The gift shop and concessions set-up will allow for social distancing of volunteers and for customers waiting in line.

### **4. Sanitizing/Cleaning**

- Hand sanitizer will be placed at all entrances to the building and in dressing rooms, backstage areas and the lobby. Frequent use of hand sanitizer and frequent hand washing will be encouraged.
- Assigned volunteers will be responsible for frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces throughout the facility, disinfecting of props between uses, and disinfecting of auditorium surfaces (using mist sprayer) between performances. (Sprayer equipment and cleaning supplies will be provided as an in-kind service of The Maids.)
- Jackson Academy will provide for cleaning of bathrooms and lobby and collection of trash.