



"WHERE LEARNING HAS BEEN AN ART SINCE 1984"

COMPANY NEWS

January 4th, 2010 Edition

PHONE: 253.627.7837 + WEBSITE: Washington.ActionDance.com/PerformingCompany

Director: Jacob Rodvelt-Gamlieli + Coordinator: Anna Vega

Successful New Dance Year

How to enjoy this dance season more.

Dance should be a fun experience and sometimes I find that we lose sight of this and become bogged down with competition worries, costume malfunctions, growing account balances and numerous other interferences. I have three things that I'd like you to try this new year before allowing negativity to pollute your dance experience.

1.) Take a deep breath... and hold it until you pass out. When you wake up, the problem will probably have passed. If it hasn't, try my second suggestion.

2.) Pretend you're 3-years-old and freely roll on the floor, flutter around the crowded lobby pretending to be a butterfly or just start a random game of tag. You're it!

3.) Ask yourself...Will this matter one year from now? Ten years from now? One hundred years from now? Chances are it won't. Don't sweat the small stuff and it's all small stuff.

My point is I want dance to be completely enjoyable. Please use the rest of the guidelines in this handout to help make the competition/convention season the best one yet!

Convention Retention

Follow these guidelines for smooth weekends at dance conventions.

Parent/guardians will need to fill out a travel agreement/medical release

form to attend events with Action. Dancers should get a full night's rest Friday night before the convention. Dancers will meet in the lobby on Saturday and Sunday morning at the designated time in their complete company uniform. Dancers that choose to wear something besides their uniform may be charged \$50 per occurrence. Your appearance is important to me and will set your attitude for the rest of the day. Dress for success. Please follow our normal studio dress code including hair policies during all convention classes. When we meet in the lobby on Saturday you will be given your bracelet, a convention schedule (if possible) and an Amazing Dancer Medal (we'll cover that later). Keep in mind that students who show up late on Saturday and Sunday are keeping the teachers from taking the convention classes that they've paid to take. Not only do they enjoy taking these classes, but what they learn in these classes they can pass onto you to make you a better dancer.

During the convention/competition, dancers are not to leave the group unless permission is given by the director of Action, company coordinator or designated teaching faculty member. All dancers must participate in the auditions offered at the convention/competition and all jazz classes. Dancers must also participate in all classes of their company's genre (i.e. dancers in ballet company must take ballet class, dancers in tap company must take tap class and so on and so forth). Participating means actively taking class, not sitting or standing in the back. I encourage dancers to participate in every class that's offered. Diversifying your abilities

and broadening your horizons can lead to exciting possibilities and besides, you've already paid for the classes.

During competition, I expect all dancers to be in the audience for each other's groups as much as can reasonably be expected. We are all part of a team that benefits from each other's support. Dancers must attend their own awards, including group awards (i.e. Sr Tap group awards). This is part of being proud of your performance and being gracious of the audience and judges. Dancers can be excused from one group awards ceremony per year by notifying me that you'll be absent, *in advance*.

Offstage Etiquette

I demand and expect kindness from all dancers, parents, teachers, and convention attendees.

Not only do we need to show kindness and respect to our own Action Dancers at events, we also need to show our fellow studios. Other teachers are my colleagues not my competitors. The same is true for you. Remember that song at the end of High School Musical, "We're All In This Together?" That's exactly how we need to view ourselves at events. That song has so much truth about dancers and humanity.

You never know who may be standing next to you in the parking lot. It could be the representative of a major dance company scouting for talent. Dancers with a negative attitude will not get the job. They will be a flash in the pan no matter how talented they might be. Those with positive energy will win in the long run, in their career and throughout



"WHERE LEARNING HAS BEEN AN ART SINCE 1984"

COMPANY NEWS

January 4th, 2010 Edition

PHONE: 253.627.7837 + WEBSITE: Washington.ActionDance.com/PerformingCompany

Director: **Jacob Rodvelt-Gamlieli** + Coordinator: **Anna Vega**

life. The longevity of their career will speak volumes. As I've said for years, "Always put your best foot forward." Audience members, please remember that this is a dance competition, not a soccer match. It is one thing to be supportive and quite another to blow out the judge's eardrum with heckling. The judges are focusing on the performers and only want them to do well. If parents are screaming, it distracts the judges from doing their job. It is especially annoying when the choreography is inappropriate along with bad technique and parents screaming. Applause and cheering at the beginning and end of the piece is appropriate—for everyone. Starting this year, I am also supporting some applause during high paced numbers such as hip hop and jazz. However, I still feel we should be more like a Broadway Show than a wrestling match.

Awards

Your medal is not what's important.

The experience, the camaraderie that develops, learning how to grow with others' critiques, and the chance to perform are what's really important. We will take the judges' critiques home and listen to what they have to say. We will take their comments to heart, make the changes and grow from the experience.

Action Dancers will also all be handing out our own Amazing Dancer Medals. Each Action Dancer is to give one medal to another deserving dancer from another studio at the convention. Hopefully this gesture will help you respect your fellow dancers and encourage

camaraderie beyond studio boundaries. You may award your medal to a dancer who exhibits outstanding talent, while others may give theirs to whomever gave great effort, persevered through adversity, showed a lot of potential or simply exhibited what they considered an award-worthy smile. There's no criteria for who deserves your medal. Every Action Dancer in attendance at the 2010 Co Dance Convention must participate in this program. When giving away your medal you are to encourage the student that receives the award to visit the website on the back of the medal to share their feelings about receiving the medal. Dancers should also encourage the winner to re-award the medal at their next convention to whomever they deem award worthy. It is my goal for these medals to carry goodwill to dancers far beyond their original home.

The Challenge

What about the studio that does put inappropriate choreography or costumes out there and they still get a platinum trophy?

It is a fact that if there is a technically superb eight-year-old in garters dancing to "Big Spender," she will get the award. It is not the student's fault that she was misdirected. Judges love kids and they are not going to hurt them because of the stupidity of their teacher. It makes me angry that any teacher would put a student in that situation. However, if the dancer is technically incredible, it is not the judges' intention to punish her for her teacher's indiscretion.

You Can Do It, Dance Can Help

Believing in yourself will lead to SUCCESS.

We live in a world that teaches us to value the perceptions of other people more than our own. To some extent, our success is controlled by the opinions of other people. This is particularly evident in the dance industry, where others' perceptions of our technique, physical characteristics, and beauty determine whether or not we book a job, receive a Platinum or even get accepted onto company. Although some of the points of view are based on fact and presented as constructive criticism, most are based on assumptions.

I have seen my share of students who leave an audition or competition with tears in their eyes, falling into their mothers' arms in defeat and bewilderment that they did not win. I want to wipe away their tears and tell them that everything will be all right. But deep down I know that would only be a Band-Aid, a momentary comfort. Inevitably, it will happen again and again if they continue to dance and even if they don't continue to dance it will happen. Failure is part of life. For every win, someone must fail, there comes a point when we exhale.... oops, Whitney is getting me carried away but the point is we must have a positive outlook, strong self-esteem, and belief and trust in ourselves. Success is born from what one does after a failure. I'm not telling you to ignore what others say, I'm telling you to listen to what you have to say.