

**BTA**  
BALLET THEATRE  
AUSTRALIA



PROSPECTUS



## OUR VISION

To inspire, nurture and guide  
dancers of excellence to become  
artists of the future.



## ABOUT BTA

Ballet Theatre Australia is a respected, leading full-time ballet school located in the heart of Melbourne. We develop mature and professional dancers in a nurturing environment, guided by a world class faculty delivering the highest standards of dance training.

Established in 1999 by former Director, Leeanne Rutherford, our success is founded on the belief that each student can succeed. Celebrating over two decades of excellence, BTA has been both the training ground and launch pad for many dancers to enter into vocational and professional dance careers.

Ballet Theatre Australia offers training of an international standing. Under the direction of Ben Davis, students are taught in small classes allowing the faculty to give personal attention to each student, maximising their learning experience as they strive toward a career in dance.

## BTA PROGRAMS

### JUNIOR FULL-TIME PROGRAM

#### Acceptance from 13 years of age

The Junior Full-Time Program focuses on developing and nurturing the individual within a serious but encouraging environment. The course aims to give each student a strong and refined classical technique, along with an elegant style and professional attitude toward their training. Students are given a variety of challenging performance opportunities as well as the prospect of private coaching for national and international ballet competitions. Dancers are guided across all aspects of classical technique, the curriculum also includes:

- Repertoire
- Pas de deux
- Character
- Contemporary
- Body Conditioning
- Specialist Cross Training
- Yoga
- Theatre Makeup

Junior students participate in a four-day weekly schedule whilst maintaining their academic studies via Virtual School Victoria (VSV).

### SENIOR PRE-PROFESSIONAL FULL-TIME PROGRAM

#### Students to 21 years of age

The Senior and Pre-Professional Programs focus on extending upon the individual's artistry whilst further refining a level of technical excellence, preparing the student to enter directly into a career with a professional ballet company. Students are given a variety of performance opportunities as well as the prospect of private coaching for national and international ballet competitions. Dancers are guided across all aspects of classical technique, the curriculum also includes:

- Repertoire
- Pas de deux
- Character
- Contemporary
- Body Conditioning
- Specialist Cross Training
- Yoga
- Theatre Makeup

Senior students participate in a five-day weekly schedule whilst maintaining their academic studies via Virtual School Victoria (VSV).

### ACADEMIC STUDIES

Outside of training hours students maintain their academic studies through Virtual School Victoria (VSV). In doing this we ensure that all students are well-rounded and have the opportunity to achieve as many career pathways as possible. Virtual learning allows students to maximise a full day's dance training whilst learning through courses in real-time online classes and face to face communication.

## TEACHING FACULTY

### BEN DAVIS – DIRECTOR

Former Soloist of The Australian Ballet, Ben started his formal training at Ballet Theatre Australia under the direction of its founder, Leeanne Rutherford. During his time at the school, Ben received further coaching in New York City.

Ben began his career performing throughout Germany and Austria before returning to Australia and joining The Australian Ballet in 2005. In 2008 he was awarded a professional development scholarship from TAB to receive coaching abroad at the Royal Ballet in London, Paris Opera Ballet and Vienna Staatsoper. During his 13 years spent with The Australian Ballet Ben worked with some of the world's finest dancers, choreographers and coaches. Performing various featured and leading roles in the company's expansive repertoire, many of which were created on him.

Appointed Director of Ballet Theatre Australia in 2020, Ben is passionate about sharing his numerous years of stage and industry experience with the school's next generation of young artists.

### JANE CASSON

As a former Soloist of The Australian Ballet and Royal New Zealand Ballet, Jane's career saw her travel the world performing numerous featured and leading roles in both the classical and contemporary repertoire.

Throughout her career Jane's professional accolades include receiving the 2007 Green Room Award for 'Best Female Dancer' for her Year's work with The Australian Ballet and being twice nominated for the Telstra Dancer of the Year Award in 2004 and 2007. Jane was also awarded a professional development scholarship to study with the Paris Opera Ballet, Ballet de Nice, Ballet de Monte Carlo and the Hamburg Ballet. Ballet Theatre Australia is thrilled to benefit from Jane's wealth of experience and passion for the art form.

### NATASHA KUSEN

As a finalist in the 2001 Prix de Lausanne, Natasha was awarded a one year scholarship to her chosen international training institution, The Royal Ballet School. Following this year of training, Natasha received a full scholarship from Gailene Stock to complete a further two years of training in London. During her time as a student, Natasha was invited to tour with The Royal Ballet Company, performing throughout Australia & Russia. After graduating from the Upper School, Natasha returned home to join The Australian Ballet in 2003.

Through many career highlights and featured roles, Natasha was promoted to Soloist in 2013. Natasha gave her final performance at the Sydney Opera House in December 2019 after more than 16 years of touring around the world with The Australian Ballet. Ballet Theatre Australia is fortunate to welcome Natasha to the teaching faculty of 2020.

### KIRSTY MARTIN

After graduating from the Australian Ballet School in 1995, Kirsty accepted a position with The Australian Ballet. She rose quickly through the ranks, being promoted to Soloist in 1998 and to Senior Artist in 1999. In 2000 Kirsty took a two year hiatus from TAB, joining Nederlands Dance Theater, where she worked with renowned choreographer Jiří Kylián and performed an extensive range of contemporary ballets.

Upon returning to The Australian Ballet Company in 2002, Kirsty was promoted to Principal Artist the following year. Throughout her career Kirsty performed leading roles in both the classical and contemporary repertoire, many of which were created on her. In 2009 she was awarded the prestigious Benois de la Danse for her performances in Sir Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon* and was invited to perform at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

Kirsty retired from the stage in 2011 after a successful and fulfilling career. To expand her teaching skills, Kirsty completed a Graduate Diploma in Elite Dance Instruction at The Australian Ballet School and also embarked on studying an Advanced Yoga Teaching Training Course. Kirsty is excited to share her knowledge and experience with the students of Ballet Theatre Australia.





## APPLICATION TO BTA

We welcome prospective students to apply for entry to Ballet Theatre Australia. To ensure a student is ready for the rigorous curriculum, we assess dancers on flexibility, strength, physicality, musicality and ability to apply corrections. An application form can be downloaded from BTA's website. Only auditionees unable to attend a class are invited to submit an online audition reel.

### Class Audition

Prospective students must fill in the Audition Application Form. Upon receipt of Application Form, Required Photographs and Fee the prospective student will be invited to attend a class with the Director of Ballet Theatre Australia. A class audition gives the prospective student an opportunity to experience the style of training within a class environment.

### Online Audition Reel

Prospective students are invited to upload an audition reel via YouTube (unlisted video) and provide the private link with all application material via email. Material may be removed from YouTube once audition process has concluded.

### Required Photographs

- Fifth position à terre
- First arabesque en l'air
- Relevé fifth position en pointe

### Audition Reel Material

- Barre work comprising of Plié and Tendu (one side only)
- Adage at the barre (utilising right & left sides)
- Grand Battement
- Centre practice Adage/Port de Bras
- Pirouette enchainement (one side only)
- Petit and Grand Allegro
- Females must include one relevé enchainement en pointe
- A short variation highlighting auditionee's performance quality

## BTA ALUMNI

BTA is proud of its alumni who have danced in some of the most prestigious dance companies worldwide. Students have gone on to enjoy successful careers with companies such as The Australian Ballet, Queensland Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Monaco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Alberta Ballet Canada, Zurich Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet and Colorado Ballet.

**Ben Davis**, The Australian Ballet

**Natalie Barbis**, Teatrul de Balet Sibiu

**Tamra Burke**, London Ballet Company

**Rebekah Davey**, Hong Kong Ballet

**Hayley Farr**, San Francisco Ballet

**Breeana Flannery**, Arts Ballet Theatre Florida

**Jack Gibbs**, Melbourne Ballet Company

**Bethany Headland**, Washington Ballet, Vienna Festival Ballet

**Marina Job**, New English Contemporary Ballet

**Alexandra Kearney**, Bolshoi Ballet Academy

**Taline Kenar**, Colorado Ballet

**Emilia Lakic**, Ballett Vorpommern

**Jennifer Lawrence**, Ballet de Printemps, British Columbia Canada

**Matthew Lehmann**, Monaco Ballet, Alberta Ballet Canada

**Vanessa Morelli**, Queensland Ballet

**Rob Moorcroft**, Professional Development Queensland Ballet, Ballet Cymru Wales

**Amber Munro**, The Australian Ballet, National Ballet of Canada

**Lana Panfilow**, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Harleijn Dans Theater

**Gemma Pearce**, Queensland Ballet

**John Pickup**, Lithuanian Ballet

**Kristy Tancred**, Various companies throughout the United States

**Valerie Tereshchenko**, The Australian Ballet

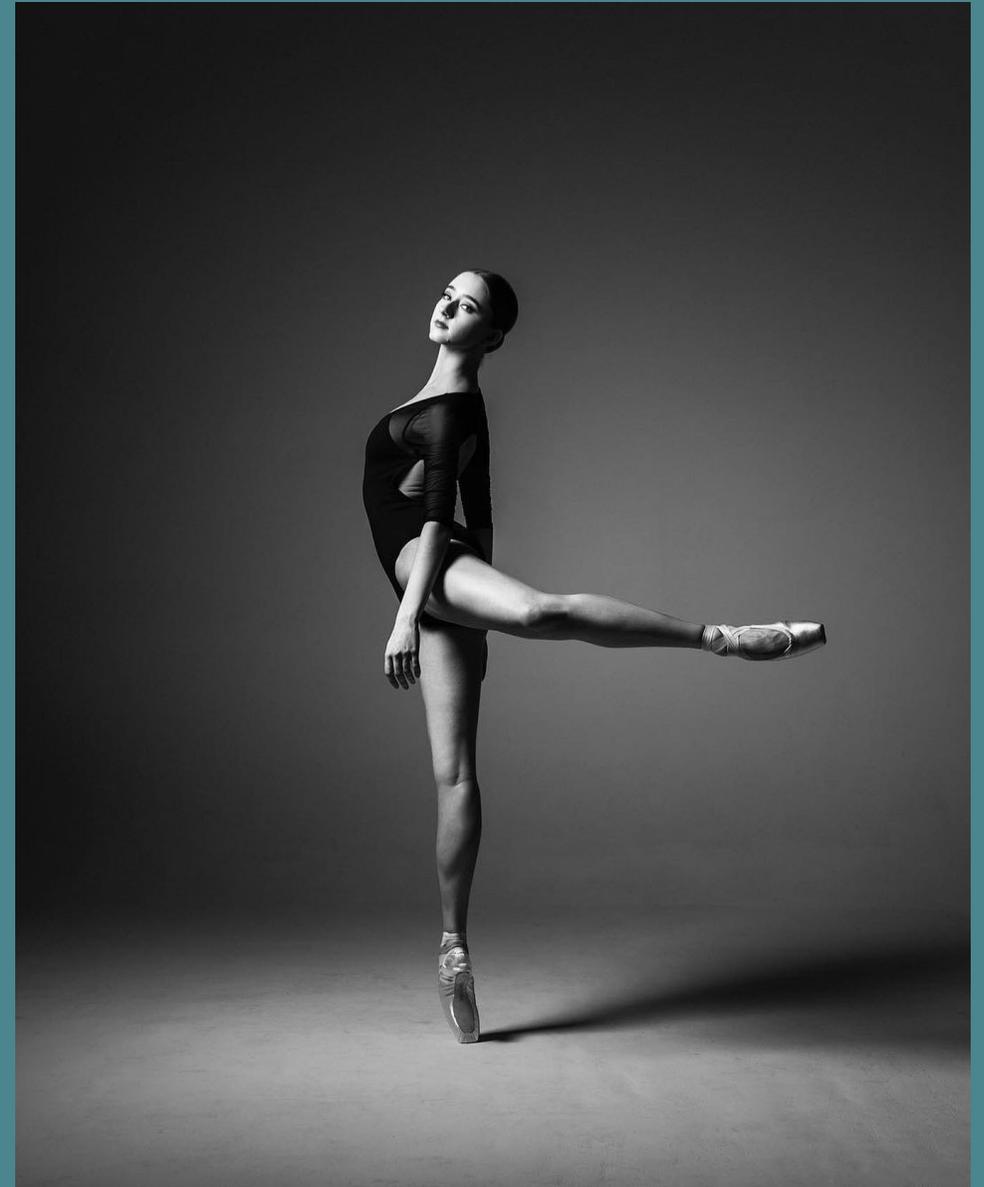
**Alice Topp**, Royal New Zealand Ballet, The Australian Ballet

**Jack Traylen**, Lithuanian National Ballet

**Gus Upchurch**, Milwaukee Ballet

**Alice Vincent**, Alberta Ballet Canada, Zurich Ballet

**Shai Voorham**, Vancouver Ballet Canada



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