

YOUTH CLASSES

Placing students correctly is a core aspect to the Berkshire Pulse Performing Arts Program curriculum. For placement and class recommendations, we carefully consider a wide variety of factors: specific interest, physical skill, peer group, emotional maturity, years of previous study and age. Each student is placed where we believe they will have the greatest potential for fulfillment and growth.

NEW dance students age 9+ who would like to participate in the Ballet and Modern classes are encouraged to attend one class for placement prior to enrollment. Returning students are not required to take placement classes.

Students who would like to try a class, or are seeking class recommendations, can email berkshire.pulse@gmail.com for more information.

Youth classes for the spring session run January 18 to May 28, unless otherwise noted.

CREATIVE DANCE for ages 4-6

The joy of movement and imagination are inspired through a playful and guided approach to improvisation, shape, rhythm, balance, flow, and locomotor skills. Lively music, stories, and imagery are key elements of this class. Connections to real-world experiences are made to meet children where they are and build self-esteem in an inclusive group environment. Traditional technique is introduced for continuation in the dance forms of their choice.

Monday with Tom Truss, 3:45 - 4:45 PM (Last class on March 28) Sara Keisel,

April 11 – May 28

Saturday with Erin Naylor, 9-10 AM

TUMBLING for ages 5-7

With Erin Naylor

This class offers a fun and exciting introduction to tumbling and building basic skills for gymnastics for the young, active child. Students will practice balance, coordination, and strength that can support them in becoming more confident with their bodies. They will learn about major muscle groups and how to use them as well as some yoga stretching that will benefit them in dance, other sports, and play. Skills introduced and practiced

will include forward/backward tumbles, headstands, handstands, shoulder stands, backbends, cartwheels, and smart stretching for safe practice and flexibility.

Saturday 10:15-11:15 AM

INTRO TO DANCE for ages 6-8

With Fiona Scruggs

A playful approach to traditional technique, improvisation, shape and rhythm, music and story, balance and flow, this class is an ideal introduction to dance. The pleasure of movement is inspired while preparing students for continuation in the dance form of their choice. Students must be at the first-grade level, to participate in this class.

Wednesday 3:50-4:50 PM

DANCE FOUNDATIONS for ages 8-10

With Bettina Montano

Students build a basic understanding of traditional modern and ballet dance technique while learning to loosen, strengthen and explore their body's movement vocabulary. With joyful and dynamic exercises and improvisational techniques, basic principles of rhythm, movement quality, musicality, and alignment are acquired, laying a clear foundation for further interdisciplinary dance studies.

Tuesday 3:50-4:50 PM

BEGINNERS TAP for ages 7-10

With Fiona Scruggs

This class is an introduction to the basic tap fundamentals terminology. We will focus on developing coordination, rhythmic skills and proper tap technique. Students will work as a group and have lots of fun creating rhythmic patterns and choreography.

Wednesday 5-6 PM

INTRO TO FLAMENCO for ages 9-12

With Joanne B. Jackson

In this class, beginner students will be introduced to all the basic aspects of Flamenco. Weekly classes will focus on footwork (as a percussion instrument), upper body coordination, understanding flamenco music, and compás and proper posture and breathing. With consistent attendance, students will begin to develop the muscular strength, movement skills, artistic nuance and musicality necessary for flamenco dance.

Thursday 4:15-5:15 PM

INTRO TO DRUMMING for ages 8-adult

With Rick Shrum

This rhythm and music introductory class offers students a chance to feel and play with the rhythms of their own lives and of the world. Drummers will listen and learn the pulse and patterns of rhythms to repeat and master, the “call and response” of songs, and to hear and respond to “the break” (to start, change, and stop movement and playing.) As the class progresses the group will learn to play different parts against and with one another creating an ensemble of inspirational rhythm and music. Instruments provided.

Tuesday 3:45-4:30 PM

FUNK BOX BREAKING for ages 10+

With Andres Ramirez

Level 1 – Introduction to breaking, learn basic foundational moves with some fun games that help develop both strength and musicality.

Level 2 – Move progression, working and increasing foundational moves for a more complete dance. Kids will start learning how to freestyle in and out of moves. Kids will also learn a variety of footwork types. Students will learn cypher etiquette.

Ages 10+

Friday 4-5 PM

Starts January 28

NON CONTACT BOXING for ages 13+

With Genève Berkshire Boxing

This program provides a welcoming and supportive class for all levels of experience and fitness. Mastering a physical skill does wonders for self-worth and confidence, not to mention health and fitness! Because we teach points-based boxing in this class, it is the perfect modality for the developing bodies of young athletes. This fun class focuses on improving fitness and learning all the elements of boxing training, from practicing punch combos, to throwing a great uppercut on the heavy bag, to learning jump-rope tricks.

New boxing students are required to take one intro class before the session.

January 25: Intro class for new students

Spring Session starts February 1

Email berkshire.pulse@gmail.com if you need to find an alternative intro class time.

Tuesday, 3:45-4:45 PM

DANCE FOR BOYS for ages 10-14

With Tom Masters

Here's a chance to jump, turn and soar! This class introduces boys, and male identifying persons, to the athletic and artistic skills required in dance training. The class includes elementary classical dance technique, improvisation and dance making. Rhythm, movement quality, musicality, and healthy alignment are developed while offering students the opportunity to explore their own strengths and abilities through a diverse dance practice. An inspiring foundation for further study in all dance forms, sports and life!

Thursday 4-5:15 PM

BEGINNERS BALLET for ages 8-10

With Fiona Scruggs

The foundations of ballet class, technique, alignment, vocabulary, and rhythm are introduced. Students will learn introductory skills of using the ballet barre. Center and traveling classwork draw on character (theatrical folk dance) rhythms and traditional ballet technique progressions. Creativity and experiencing music through movement are emphasized.

Saturday 9–10 AM

BALLET 1 for ages 9-12

With Fiona Scruggs

Ballet fundamentals and skills are introduced through the use of the barre and mirror as training tools. Short ballet movement phrases are inspired by character (theatrical folk) dance and classical ballet technique to further develop musicality and vocabulary. Group awareness, positive body image, and the joy of artistic expression and storytelling are emphasized.

Requirements: Participation in two classes per week for ballet 1 dancers is required.

Additional classes may include: Intro to Flamenco, Dances of Africa, Capoeira, Modern 1, Intro to Breaking, etc.

SATURDAY 10:15-11:30 AM

MODERN 1 for ages 10-12

With Susan Quinn

Students build upon the fundamentals of dance technique through the study of traditional modern dance principles. Through center practice, basic phrase work, dynamic traveling sequences, improvisation and dance making, students will establish a strong sense of alignment, rhythmic and musical versatility and freedom of expression through movement.

Requirements: Participation in two classes per week is recommended, but not required.

Additional classes include: Intro to Flamenco, Dances of Africa, Capoeira, Ballet 1, Intro to Breaking, etc.

Monday 4-5:15 PM

MODERN 2 for ages 11+

With Gillian Ebersole

Gillian's Modern 2 class incorporates elements of her eclectic dance training, drawing on Modern techniques and vocabulary while also integrating improvisation, chance, and artistry. We will continue to focus on alignment, balance, fall and recovery, and strengthening and releasing. A conscientious and supportive group experience in a safe and caring environment is emphasized.

Requirements: Participation in two technique classes per week is required for modern 2 dancers.

Additional classes include: Ballet 2, Jazz 2/3, Intro to Flamenco, Dances of Africa, Capoeira, Intro to Breaking, etc.

Wednesday 4-5:30 PM

BALLET 2 for ages 10+

With Melissa Elstein

This class is for students with previous ballet training including a solid understanding of basic ballet vocabulary. We will build on that vocabulary and refine alignment through core strengthening warmups and dynamic barre work that directly relates to center ballet exercises. Level 2 ballet technique is learned with an emphasis on whole body movement, breathing, musicality, strengthening and stretching – all while cultivating a healthy body image and mental focus. Students may learn a ballet variation by the end of the semester. Pre-pointe work foot strengthening exercises are taught that are beneficial for all students, whether interested in progressing to pointe or choosing to remain in soft ballet slippers.

Canvas ballet slippers are required. Hair shall be in a bun or high ponytail (if applicable) so the alignment of the student's neck is visible. Please see Pulse's dress code for more specifics.

Requirements: Participation in two ballet classes a week and one modern, jazz, flamenco, Dances of Africa, Capoeira, or Funk Box breaking class is required for these students.

Tuesday and Thursday 3:45-5:15 PM

JAZZ 2-3 for ages 11+

Straight from Broadway, this class focuses on integrating technique into the performance of more advanced jazz dance steps. Isolations, technique, specificity and rhythm lay the groundwork for this jazz class. This class comes down to performance and execution. Students will be expected to dance various styles of jazz, from

Broadway to Pop to make the dancer competitive in today's contemporary market. Dancers should come to class with clean pirouettes, ideally at least a double.

Requirements: one additional class a week in either modern, ballet, Flamenco, and FunkBox breaking are all options.

Monday 3:45-5 PM

MODERN 3 for ages 13+

With Bettina Montano

This class is centered on the principles and techniques of modern dance. Particular emphasis is placed on alignment and freedom of the body, as well as grounding and continuous movement.

Participants will learn the fundamentals of Limón, Cunningham, and Graham technique, and how these dance languages are relevant in contemporary dance. The class will progress through a series of set exercises and build upon phrase material informed by modern modalities.

Requirements: A minimum of three technique classes are required for participants in this class. These can include modern, ballet, flamenco, jazz, Funk Box breaking, etc. Modern 3 students are encouraged to participate in the Young Choreographers Workshop which immediately follows this class on Wednesdays.

Wednesday 4-5:30 PM

BALLET 3 for ages 12+

With Fiona Scruggs

Students continue to lay a strong foundation for further development of technical and artistic skills including more challenging rhythmic variations and longer phrases and additional classical ballet vocabulary.

Requirements: Two ballet and one modern or jazz technique class per week is required for participation in ballet 3.

Monday 5:30-7PM and Friday 4-5:30 PM

YOUNG CHOREOGRAPHERS WORKSHOP for ages 13+

With Susan Quinn

Open level

This class offers dancers an opportunity to expand their own movement vocabulary while deepening their skills in spatial design, dynamics, rhythm and form. We will hone improvisational and collaborative skills by crafting dance into solo and group forms while at the same time uncovering how movement and space are both personal and political. This class will culminate in a presentation open to the public in May or June.

Requirements: One additional technique class is required to participate in this class. The Modern 2 and Modern 3 classes are highly recommended.

Wednesday 5:45-7:15 PM

Young Choreographers Initiative for ages 16+

With Susan Quinn and IAN Spencer Bell

A composition/performance class for students who participated in the Fall MOVEMENT: THE LANGUAGE OF TRANSFORMATION workshop. This class is designed for young choreographers committed to transforming themselves and their world through the craft of dance-making while also expanding their dynamic range as performers. Artists will collaborate on a group piece for the end-of-year performance based on their discovery of what matters to them as a community. Get ready to connect, have fun, and create a dance that makes a difference! (This class is required for Senior YCI artists).

Saturday, 1:30-3:00 PM

SENIOR CHOREOGRAPHIC PROJECT for ages 17+

A full-year commitment for students in their final year at Berkshire Pulse.

Dancers are invited to explore the process of creating original dance and to ultimately choreograph a solo or group piece for Pulse's Spring performance. This senior student is required to participate in the Young Choreographer's Workshop or the Young Choreographers Initiative, as an opportunity to develop skills and material. To be eligible for this project, the student must communicate their intention to participate in this project to Bettina Montano by October 15, as well as consistently attend their enrolled classes. In the Spring session, this student will be required to work on a weekly basis, independently and outside of class time. Additional rehearsals will be arranged for working with a faculty mentor of their choice.

Fee: There is a \$150 fee for participation in this project. This offsets the expenses associated with faculty mentorship and unlimited studio use during the Spring Session.

Contemporary 4 for ages 14+
With Joe Poulson and Ryoko Kudo

This class is an exploration between history, freedom, and structure within modern/contemporary dance movements and practices. Classes will focus on exploring and expanding tools of performance and process, emphasizing technical and artistic practices which encourage students to challenge themselves as artists and self-assured athletes fully committed to individual growth.

Saturdays 11:45-1:15 PM

BALLET 4 for ages 14+
With Isadora Wolfe

Building on the foundations of technique developed in Levels 1 -3, these classes introduce more advanced ballet vocabulary, develop artistic and musical phrasing, and hone the functional alignment principles necessary for a healthy and full movement experience. Classes build stamina and endurance, deepen each dancer's knowledge of their individual habits and strengths, and further refine qualitative expression, to give the dancer more options within their body and challenge them towards growth.

Requirements: Level 4 dancers are required to participate in a minimum of five classes per week. Two ballet 4 classes per week, a choice between Ballet 3 on Monday and Community Ballet on Tuesday, plus a choice of one modern, jazz, choreography, contemporary or Flamenco classes are required. Pointe work is a traditional extension of ballet technique, but not a requirement of the advanced level ballet student.

Thursdays 5:20-7:00pm and Friday 4-5:30 PM

BEGINNERS POINTE for ages 12+, by invitation
With Micheline Weiler and Melissa Elstein

Students in beginning pointe will discover the critical sense of balance and alignment that it takes to stabilize over the platform of pointe shoes. They will further develop their dance training, engaging more strength while employing a new coordination. Students will continue to employ resistance band exercises they learned in their pre-pointe work, as well as exercises at the barre, both in their slippers, and in pointe shoes, as they endeavor to develop the articulation and strength required in their feet and ankles. This slow process builds the pointe foundation for graduating from two hands on the ballet barre, to one hand, to the freedom of center work. Schedule of required classes for beginning Pointe students is determined based on the individual needs of each student and group with whom they are participating.

Requirements: A minimum of 5 classes a week is required. Beginning pointe students do not perform en pointe in the first year. Students in Beginner Pointe are required to take Saturday Intermediate Community Ballet class prior to Pointe class. Pointe work is a traditional extension of ballet technique, but not a requirement of the advanced level ballet student. Three ballet classes, in addition to a choice of modern, jazz or contemporary class are required for students training en pointe.

Saturday 11:15 AM-12 PM

GENERAL POINTE REQUIREMENTS:

Pointe work is extremely challenging and demands a high level of commitment in order to fine tune alignment, build strength, and develop coordination. Appropriate physical and emotional maturity are required in order to begin and engage in Pointe work, which generally does not occur before the age of 12. At least two years of prior Ballet training are a necessary preparation. Pointe work is available to Intermediate and Advanced level Ballet students by invitation.

Participation in Pointe class en pointe requires consistent attendance in all technique classes throughout the week. For injury prevention, students who are absent from technique classes may be asked to participate in make up classes if available, or to take Pointe class in ballet slippers until all classes have again been attended.

BROADWAY JAZZ 3-4 for ages 14+
With Tom Masters

This high-energy class will prepare any dancer for the bright lights of Broadway! Relying heavily on a knowledge of ballet and jazz, this class will place a high focus on musical interpretation as you learn actual Broadway choreography.

Requirements: Participation in an additional ballet and/or modern technique class is required for students in this class.

Friday 5:30-7 PM

TAP -INTERMEDIATE for ages 11+

With Tom Masters

This class will be focusing on clean technique and developing a wider vocabulary of steps.

Tuesday 5-6 PM

TAP -ADVANCED for ages 13+

Get out your tap shoes, Francis! This class will focus on clean technique, rhythm, precision and performance. With a Broadway lens, our repertoire this session will focus on Susan Stroman, Casey Nicholaw, Gower Champion, and Kathleen Marshall. In addition to the precise execution of steps, we will focus on performance and execution.

Monday 5:15-6:15 PM

BRAZILIAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE for ages 10+

With Tarcisio Ramos Dos Santos

In this class we will learn several iconic Brazilian rhythms including Samba, Samba Reguea, Baião, Xaxado, and Maracatu. All these rhythms have an African influence and are the backbone of the Brazilian musical soul. We will learn to play traditional Brazilian instruments that compose the Brazilian percussive ensemble called Bateria! It will be fun and we will learn together one beat at a time!

COMMUNITY CLASSES

Community classes for the fall session run September 13 – January 15, unless otherwise noted.

Community class rates for the Spring Session:

10 for \$150 Class Pass

20 for \$240 Class Pass

ADULT BROADWAY JAZZ for ages 18+

Tom Masters

Join Ilana Ransom Toeplitz (Broadway's VIOLET & THE PROM) to jazz-hand-and-Fosse-out all of your wildest Broadway dreams! This class is designed for anyone with 2+ years dance experience and a love for finishing other people's sentences with unprompted lyrics from your favorite musicals. Class begins with a stretch and warm-up, some across-the floor work and eventually a combination. This session, we'll be

dancing to the original Broadway choreography from “Chicago”, “Legally Blonde”, “The Prom” as well as other hits from new and old show tunes.... and All That Jazz. Character or Jazz shoe/sneaker recommended. Jazz hands mandatory. Hotcha. Whoopee.

Friday 6:45 - 8pm

INTRO TO BRAZILIAN SAMBA DANCE for ages 16+

With Tarcisio Ramos Dos Santos

Samba is the most popular AfroBrazilian dance known and practiced in Brazil and around the world. The peculiar and fun samba dance steps are a fun workout and a way to express yourself. The meter is a simple 2/4 but its syncopation brings an authentic energy where the dancer will play, dance, create and, most importantly, have fun. This is an introductory Samba class and no dance experience is required. The class will be predominantly solo dancing, but there will be partnering at times.

Friday 7-8pm

SHAKE YOUR SOUL

With Madeline Despres-Chen

Shake Your Soul® is a movement practice that relaxes the nervous system, energizes the body, and awakens the soul through a fluid dance repertoire set to music from around the world.

Participants learn to move intuitively and listen to the wisdom of their bodies while connecting with self and others. All levels and ages welcome! If you love to move but don't consider yourself a “dancer,” this class is for you. If you consider yourself a “dancer” and you would like to connect with your body on a deeper level, this class is for you.

Class typically begins with a Qi Gong warm up, and then Madeline will lead participants through various types of movement relating to the different fluids within the body. The final portion of the class includes movement activities that allow for individual expression, partner work, and relating to the group. This class is never about how you look—only about how you feel.

Participants are encouraged to adjust any movement that Madeline offers according to their own needs and level of comfort.

Thursday 5:30-6:30pm & Friday 10-11am

BALLET, ADVANCED BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE for ages 12+

With Alex Bloomstein and Shannon Nulf

Dancers will be challenged to enhance balance, coordination, flexibility, and footwork. Barre work will include exercises to both improve speed and accuracy of movement, as well as those to build strength and control in adage. Center work will build upon the dancers' proficiency, as well as develop artistry through the movements – port de bras, adagio, small jumps, pirouettes and turns and traveling movements. Modifications and progressions will be made to accommodate each dancer's ability level.

Tuesday 6:30 – 8 PM w/ Alex Bloomstein

Saturday 9:30-11 AM w/ Shannon Nulf

BALLET ZEN CLASS – Adult Ballet, Core Strengthening , & Relaxation Exercises for ages 21+

With Melissa Elstein

Taught by Melissa Elstein, this fusion class is open to adults 21 and over. All ages will benefit, including seniors, from learning gentle core strengthening exercises at the beginning of class, followed by ballet barre and basic center work, and a guided deep relaxation and short meditation to close. There will be an emphasis on leg and core strengthening, weight shifting, and balance work while learning adult ballet technique. These skills are useful for fall prevention – so important as we age – and combined here with beautiful music, the gracefulness of ballet movement, mental focus and relaxation, students will have a holistic movement class experience.

Canvas ballet slippers, jazz shoes, or socks with traction required.

Must bring your own yoga mat.

Thursday, 2-3:15 PM

CONTEMPORARY for movers of all levels, ages 14-adult

With Fern Katz

In this class, we will explore the building blocks of floorwork technique. This includes spiraling in and out of the floor, basic acrobatics commonly found in contemporary dance, working with the floor as a dance partner, shifting weight, axis, and center of gravity. Class will typically start with a vigorous warmup, move to the center for a floorwork phrase, and end with a big, juicy contemporary phrase. In addition to contemporary floorwork technique, you can also expect to play with stage presence, performance quality, dance making, and improvisation. This class is appropriate for those with a strong background in movement who are looking to build floorwork technique from the ground up. Most importantly, in this class we will co-create an environment that encourages each individual to build productive mental tools that will efficiently strengthen performative skills.

Monday 6:15-7:45PM

MODERN, BEGINNER+ for ages 14-adult

With Bettina Montano

This gentle dance class for adults and teens is based on breath, flow, rhythm and release. Drawing on various expressions and techniques of modern dance, classwork includes opening with structured improvisation into warm-up exercises in center which move into more generous use of space with joyful and dynamic phrases.

Tuesday 9-10:15 AM

MODERN, INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED for ages 16-adult

With Bettina Montano

Drawing from a variety of modern dance traditions and techniques, this class emphasizes technical and artistic classwork which develops strength, flexibility, alignment, musicality and versatility of expression. Classes begin with structured improvisation and floor-work, progressing to dynamic phrases in center, at the barre and traveling across the floor. Participants are encouraged to attend as regularly as possible.

Thursday, 5:30-6:45pm

YOGA, ALL LEVELS

With Erin Naylor

Whether this is your first or 200th class, you'll feel right at home here! With an emphasis on basic alignment and foundations, asana (postures), pranayama (breath exercises) and meditation are broken down for greater understanding and exploration of the body. Questions and requests are encouraged. Detailed instruction is provided, and all are welcome. Bring a mat, blocks, strap and anything else you like to use when taking a yoga class.

Wednesday, 6:15 – 7:15 PM

FREE to Housatonic Residents!

FLAMENCO open level for ages 18+

With Joanne B. Jackson

This class will focus on exercises for Flamenco footwork, body posture, movement and coordination. Exercises will then be incorporated into short segments of choreography, taking the student beyond the steps and into the experience of individual style and expression. Joanne's classes increase self-confidence and emphasize individuality, supporting the student in expression of personal character and emotion. This class is best suited for students with basic knowledge of flamenco.

Tuesday 6:15 – 7:30PM

CAPOEIRA for ages 12+

With Tarsício Ramos Dos Santos

Capoeira is a Brazilian dance/martial art that combines music, rhythm, and movement, creating a unique dance form steeped in Afro-Brazilian culture. Playing capoeira is both a game and a method of practicing the application of capoeira movements in simulated combat. In this class we will learn to dance, to “fight”, to create rhythms, and to express yourself. Capoeira is a systematic yet organic art form where we teach our body to talk, listen, and most important, to dialogue.

Saturday, 12:30-1:45 PM

MOVING LIFE STORIES

With Tom Truss

Las historias de vida en movimiento ofrecen oportunidades para compartir viajes personales, historias y conexiones con lugares pasados y presentes a través de juegos de movimiento, ejercicios y baile. Este programa es GRATUITO y está abierto a todas las edades. Un traductor de habla hispana estará presente.

Moving Life Stories provides opportunities to share personal journeys, stories and connections to places past and present through movement games, exercises and dancing.

Free Community Program

Wednesday 7:30-9pm

January 31-March 23

May 2 - June 1

TAI CHI

With Berkshire Tai Chi

Manage stress and enhance your health, focus, balance and vitality with the ancient Chinese art of Tai Chi. A unique form of “moving meditation,” tai chi calms the mind, relaxes the body and strengthens the spirit. Much of tai chi is practiced slowly and gently, ideal for people of all ages and health conditions. Classes will include qi gong (energy cultivation), along with stretching and conditioning exercises. Sifu Kathy Crowe and Sifu David Crowe are certified teachers of authentic Ch’ang style tai chi.

Berkshire Tai Chi classes now include instruction in Dragon and Tiger Qigong, a simple yet very powerful set of movements designed to cultivate and move chi through the body. It is a 1,500-year-old self-healing movement system, based on the principles of acupuncture. Qigong, or energy work, helps develop good structure, vitality, balance and coordination, while gently increasing flexibility and stretching soft tissues of the body.

Monday 6:30-8PM

Friday 9:30-11AM

at Pulse and on Zoom

Ongoing

Contact greatchi@berkshiretaichi.com for information and registration.