

OLYMPIC PERFORMANCE GROUP

CAST HANDBOOK

Olympic Performance Group provides professional performance opportunities to youth dancers and other performers in Kitsap County and brings exciting dance production and education to our local community.

Being part of a performing arts company is exciting, skill building and fun! It is also can be complicated with so many people involved and the challenges of bringing performance art to life. Please read this handbook thoroughly before deciding to join the company. We want as much as possible to be clear up-front to avoid misunderstandings or confusion down the road. All performers and their parents should read this handbook and refer to it as needed.

AUDITIONS

OPG holds auditions annually in late May to early June. These auditions are for *The Nutcracker*, as as for participation in the OPG company for the entire year. The audition process is similar to what a performer might expect in the professional performing arts world where a panel looks at the overall performance during the audition and determines the best fit for upcoming production(s). See our **Auditions** tab on our Website for ideas for a successful audition.

ATTENDANCE

We cannot emphasize enough how important it is to commit to, and attend, every rehearsal. Rehearsals are mandatory. In our past experience, cast members who sign up for other commitments (team sports, other stage shows, etc.) that fall during the production season struggle to make rehearsals. In order to be in an OPG show, a performer must make it a priority.

Illness: Our main production season falls right during the cold and flu season. Please help us not spread the germs by using good hand washing, not sharing food/drinks, make up, etc. and not coming to rehearsal if you have had a fever in the last 24 hours. We understand that illnesses occur and certainly don't want to spread things amongst the cast, but if you are just under the weather and can at least come to observe, please do.

Other than for significant illness or emergency, we expect cast members to be at every rehearsal. Because missing rehearsal will negatively impact the success of the whole show, we reserve the right to re-cast a role if a member misses too many rehearsals.

It is expected that a notification be sent to danceOPG@gmail.com no later than 24 hours prior to an expected absence or as soon as possible in the case of severe illness. Because attendance is so important, expect a follow up call regarding any absence.

BENEFIT TO EACH PERFORMER

There are many benefits to being part of a performing arts company, some of which are:

- chance to perform – there aren't many in our small community
- learn what it's like to be in a professional level production
- enhanced performance ability/confidence
- FUN!

And then there are the more expansive benefits:

- collaboration/team spirit
- discipline, dedication and resilience
- community involvement
- creating something bigger than oneself and sharing it with the community

These benefits are key to OPG's mission. Youth who participate in our programs develop many skills beyond performance and technique. Adults too!

CASTING PROCESS

The panel judging the audition process is made up of professionals from the dance and performing arts world. They are looking to for the ideal fit between dancer/performer and the roles available. Sometimes due to sheer numbers in the audition and a limited number of roles, not every person can be cast. Also, there are times where the panel of judges feel a person who auditions needs a little more skill to be on stage.

The major parts in any show go to the performer with the most technical and performance skills as well as the ability to follow new choreography. A proven dedication and positive attitude from previous seasons as well as behavior including attendance, attitude and overall motivation play a role in casting. Most of the casting decisions that are made in the month following the audition are for our signature production of *The Nutcracker*. As other performance opportunities develop over the course of the year, the Artistic Director may contact a group of individuals for those pieces. Indicate your interest in these other options on your Performance Agreement.

COMMUNICATION

OPG communicates entirely through e-mail. Please let us know immediately if any changes occur to your e-mail address. If young performers have an e-mail address, it is helpful to add them as it increases their responsibility level in knowing what is happening. We also have a Facebook page which we invite you to join. As social media grows, more and more of our outreach will be taking place using these tools. Please keep whatever contributions you make to our Facebook page, Instagram, etc. professional and with the goal of marketing the incredible things we are doing to new audiences.

COSTUMES

OPG owns a large amount of costumes that have been designed and sewn on-site as well as purchased over the years. We repurpose these as much as possible for each production which means they must be handled with care by all cast members. Unless specifically instructed, costumes are not to be taken home and should be hung up carefully following each use. Eating and drinking anything other than water must be avoided while wearing a costume. Let the Costume Assistant know if they become stained, torn or any threads become loose.

DANCE TECHNIQUE CLASS REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in any of OPG's productions, dancers must be currently enrolled in a dance studio and take technique classes appropriate to their dance style. Rehearsals do not provide enough skill and stamina building or maintenance for successful performance. Just as those who play sports would not expect to play in a game without going to practice, dancers can not expect to perform well at rehearsal without continually working on their technique throughout the week.

FEES

Audition fee - \$15 per family. This fee covers the cost of the judging panel and their time spent casting.

Performance fee - \$300 per performer due within 2 weeks of casting *The Nutcracker*, our signature production. This fee is non-refundable unless there are unforeseen emergency circumstances. Those cases will be handled individually. No refunds will be extended after rehearsals begin.

OPG is a non-profit recently earning a 501(c)3 status through our affiliation with Arts & Humanities Bainbridge. We watch our finances very closely and any money made on our signature production goes towards other smaller performances during the year as well as to provide a small financial cushion in case of unforeseen circumstances. It is our hope that we will also begin to offer more educational opportunities with surplus funds, if any.

The performance fees collected pays about one fourth of the expense of putting on a show the caliber of our *Nutcracker*. The remaining expenses we pay for through ticket sales, fundraisers and sponsorships. Just like participation in sports, your fee pays for choreography (coaching) and costumes (uniform). It takes about 14 weeks to prepare for the show, which averages about \$21.00 per week to participate.

In order to assist with the cost of the performance fee, those who bring in a sponsor or procure one advertisement for the show program will be refunded \$50 in January. We also founded the Barbara Cramer Scholarship Fund in 2016, offering partial scholarships to those who may not be able to pay the entire performance fee. Contact danceOPG@gmail.com for further discrete information about this Fund.

Other expenses to anticipate:

Dance shoes, tights, undergarments (i.e. nude leotard)	\$40-80+
Stage make up based on specific instructions	\$25
Optional DVD of show	\$20

HAIR AND MAKEUP

Being on stage has certain requirements due to the lighting and the distance from the audience. Hair and makeup are designed to complement the choreographer's vision and make the feel of the performance complete and look professional. The specifics of each role will be spelled out prior to the production starting. Please do not dye hair or get a drastic haircut after auditions, as this would make the choreographer's requirements difficult to achieve.

PERFORMANCE SPACE/REHEARSAL SPACE

Our signature production of the year, *The Nutcracker*, is held at the North Kitsap Auditorium on Hostmark St. in Poulsbo, which has a professional stage and almost 500 seats. This venue allows for a larger production and enables us to bridge the Bainbridge community with other communities in Kitsap County. We also are continually seeking other performance opportunities throughout the year. From BPA, to Kiana Lodge, to a pop up stage in downtown Winslow, our goal is to bring dance to people wherever they are.

We are fortunate to rent studio space from Bainbridge Ballet. Please be respectful of this space and treat it like you would your own home, or even better. Pick up after yourself, take items with you at the end of each rehearsal day and be aware we are guests and should avoid leaving a mess.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for Nutcracker begin in August for the more rigorous and long pieces, generally Snow and Flowers. Those cast in these pieces will be advised of the expected schedule upon casting.

The entire cast begins rehearsing generally the 1st or 2nd Saturday in September and continues throughout the production. We strive to hold most rehearsing on only one day of the week - Saturday or Sunday. Starting in late November with only weeks until the production starts, there will be rehearsal time on both days of the weekend. We schedule rehearsals based on scenes of the production and make every attempt to schedule in a way that cast members need to be present for the shortest period of time. Those in multiple scenes will have to be present for longer periods of time.

Rehearsal time will most likely change from week to week depending upon progress being made. We advise that, as a rule, you keep your schedule open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm each Saturday until you get your specific rehearsal time. A specific time schedule will be sent out at

the beginning of each week. Dancers/gymnasts should come 15 minutes before rehearsal time to warm up and be ready to go.

For smaller performances outside of Nutcracker, individual rehearsal time will be scheduled and communicated.

SAMPLE ANNUAL CALENDAR

Late May/Early June - Annual Auditions

June 30 – Estimated Casting Announcement (via e-mail)

July 4th – Possible Parade Participation

August - Possible small performance

September (2nd weekend) - Rehearsals begin

September 15-30 – Fundraiser

October 31st – Halloween Downtown

November – Downtown Tree Lighting performance

November – Thanksgiving weekend (MANDATORY full run-through Sunday evening 4-7:00)

December – weekend rehearsals now include Saturdays and Sundays

December - tech rehearsals during the week before opening night

December - performances! weekend before Christmas, including Saturday, Sunday, Monday

February - May - Possible small performances

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

OPG is primarily an all-volunteer organization. We pay professionals to choreograph our shows, retain design services for some sets and lighting, and engage a professional dancer or two to enhance the experience for the cast and the audience. This leaves many tasks to a group of passionate volunteers who see the wonderful benefits our productions bring to their immediate families and our community. In order to do what we do, we need you as part of this group! What this means is:

1. Every family must commit 8 hours of volunteer time between July and mid December before the Nutcracker show weekend. Areas to volunteer are: promotions, set building, stage set up, costume sewing or steaming, fundraising, and advertising. We can help guide you into what area would make the most sense based on your interests/schedule.
2. Individuals who volunteer to head up one of the key areas receive 2 free tickets to the performance of their choice. Contact the Executive Directors if you are interested.
3. In addition to the 8 hours required before the show starts, each family must commit to working at least one shift during the performance weekend. These responsibilities include set-up, ticket sales, concessions, ushering, stage crew, backstage supervision and clean-up crew at the end that need to be taken care of. More is better and it is fun to be part of the action!

Volunteer sign-up is handled via Sign-Up Genius which will spell out the details of each volunteer opportunity.