



## Welcome to Dance Lab

*Dance Lab* is a purpose-built professional dance studio located in Somerville, Victoria. Nevertheless, we are more than just a building; we're a dance community.

Classes are offered for ages 2 through to 18+ for both recreational dancers and those who are interested in pursuing a career in dance. At *Dance Lab*, our students benefit from a number of different streams of learning and experience.

Our exam stream gives students tangible goals and achievements in pursuit of a more serious dance career; our competition stream provides students with valuable experience in performance and the spirit of competition, as well as exposure to other dancers and dance schools; and our general classes not only cater to our exam and competition dancers, but also to those who are dancing for fun or fitness. We also provide, private tuition, internal and external extension opportunities and annual concerts.

We offer our students classes in classical ballet, jazz, contemporary, tap, hip-hop, stretch/conditioning, preschool dance and more. Our class sizes are limited to 20 students, with assistant teachers in all younger classes helping our qualified teachers to ensure optimal learning.

To that end, we have an impressive teaching faculty with industry credits and high qualifications. Their expertise and mentoring approach has seen many of our students achieve the highest grades possible in exams, placements in prestigious training programs and success in the professional industry. We are proud of our professional teaching faculty and understand our responsibility of providing a child-safe organisation.

At *Dance Lab* we aim to create a balance between developing students with sound technique whilst nurturing intelligent, creative and curious young people, who are willing to explore and challenge their potential. We encourage a love and passion for dance in a safe, fun and happy environment.

Apart from students benefiting from improved physical strength, stamina and flexibility, we believe that attending dance classes helps students to develop many other life skills and abilities. Our dancers develop self-motivation, self-discipline, goal orientation, teamwork, concentration and listening skills among many other benefits. Our dancers develop friendships and experiences that can last a lifetime.

# Philosophy

Our aim at *Dance Lab* is to light the spark of passion that every dancer starts with – the *DREAM*. Our objective is to provide them with the opportunity to explore their skills and talent to make their own way. We **DARE** them to try.

A dance school is the front-line of exploring the possibilities of the industry for a dancer. To this end, we strive to provide a broad dance experience, with sound technique, through a variety of dance styles. It is only when armed with this solid foundation, that a dancer can then find their own path and refine their craft for ultimate success – to **DANCE**.

# Values

The *Dance Lab DNA*:

**Respect**

**Perseverance**

**Determination**

**Passion**

**Open communication**

At the forefront of our values is respect. *Dance Lab* teachers, dancers and families conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful; not only to each other, but also to others outside of the studio within the broader community.

Our dance community is one that encourages dancers to discover their own passion for dance and to approach their dancing with positivity, determination and perseverance. The result of this approach is happy, healthy dancers, who are willing to take risks, strive to improve themselves and encourage others.

At *Dance Lab* we value our dance community and achieve a unique *Dance Lab Spirit* through open and honest communication with students, families and the wider dance community. Through this, we are able to cater to the individual needs of each student, and establish a basis of feeling valued and important within all of our dancers.

# Classes

## Cecchetti Classical Ballet

Classical ballet is the most important training technique used to assist in dance development. Classical ballet strengthens and improves technique and overall dance quality in all styles of dance. A student studying classical ballet will gain poise, grace, body alignment, flexibility, musicality, skill, discipline, creativity and confidence. Classical ballet requires discipline and commitment, but is extremely rewarding. Once a dancer has mastered this wonderful art, the dance options are endless.

## Jazz

Our jazz program is a mixture of many things that just keeps evolving – cabaret, musicals, film, video clips and ballet. Influences include: Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, Bob Fosse & Michael Jackson. From Broadway to Hip Hop, just about anything is incorporated into jazz.

## Hip-Hop

Hip-hop is a dance style, usually danced to hip-hop music that evolved from street/pop culture. The first dance associated with hip-hop was breakdancing. While breakdancing consists primarily of moves executed close to the ground, the majority of hip-hop moves are done standing up. Hip-hop is high energy and loads of fun.

## Tap

Tap is back and cooler than ever with a new style, 'street tap'. A new generation of tappers has emerged with Australia's own Dein Perry taking it to a new level.

## Contemporary

Contemporary dance pushes the boundaries of dance. It is a highly technical form, requiring alignment, balance, coordination, control, flexibility, strength and stamina. It can follow conventional rules or be completely ground-breaking. A strong background in classical is essential for this genre.

## Stretch/Conditioning

Stretch classes help to improve [core strength](#), flexibility, and awareness in order to support efficient, graceful movement.

## Acrobatics

Acrobatics classes are incredible for balance, agility, flexibility, strength. Our classes follow the Acrobatics Arts technique.

## Examinations

Exams are offered to students studying Cecchetti Classical ballet as well as Tap and Jazz according to the Southern Federation Of Dance syllabus. Exams generally occur in the middle of the year, they incur an extra fee and are not compulsory.

# Opportunities for students

At *Dance Lab*, we believe it is our role to develop a dancer to their fullest potential. This means supporting them in their own dance journey in every way possible, to ensure that they graduate with the ability to successfully pursue pre-professional and professional opportunities in the industry. The dance industry is large and highly competitive, so any preparation that we can provide to a student to help them realise their dance dreams is important.

To this end, we provide or support a wide variety of additional opportunities to our students. This includes:

- Technique progression and recognition through **examinations**.
- **Private coaching** in both competition and exam work to supplement class learning.
- Participation in **competitions** to enhance performance experience. This includes both troupe and individual routines (solos, duos and trios). Competition troupes are also highly rewarding in terms of building teamwork and life-long dance friendships. It promotes camaraderie among age groups, as well as mentors in the form of senior assistants working with younger students.

However, *Dance Lab* is also conscious of ensuring a ballet/life balance, so we do not enter every competition out there! *Dance Lab* generally participates with Troupes in 2 – 3 competitions per year. Most students also like to enter their individual routines at these competitions as well. Additional competition experience is always supported if a student wishes to participate in other events, provided the schedule does not clash with compulsory troupe rehearsals on a Saturday.

- A highlight on the *Dance Lab* calendar is our **annual showcase**. Held in November/December, the students bring together over 50 all-new group routines created in the 3-5 months before. It's always very exciting and an amazing effort by all. This is a great opportunity for ALL Dance Lab students to come together and share in their joy of dance.
- All students can also participate in our annual **class display** in May/June, when we take our classes on stage at the Elisabeth Murdoch Centre and everyone in the family is invited to attend.
- **Extension classes** are frequently offered both within *Dance Lab* and externally with highly credentialed guest teachers. These are valuable in providing intensive training in specific areas, usually with the fresh approach of a guest teacher, which also ensures variety in a student's class learning. This is valuable in preparing students for dealing with different teaching styles and picking up new and different choreography, especially for auditions.

# Facilities

We built our studios from scratch in 2015 and offer state-of-the-art floors and facilities to ensure our dancers not only have an amazing space in which to learn, but that they are also safe at all times. Our facilities include:

- 3 purpose-built dance studios with wall length mirrors and fitted Barres.
- All floors are sprung, 2 with Tarkett flooring and 1 timber floor studio (where all tap classes are held).
- All 3 studios are equipped with commercial sound systems for the best quality music.
- 3 x 15 metre Stretch/Conditioning mats.
- Air Track mat
- Keyboard and stand.
- Meals and full kitchen area with microwave and refrigerator.
- Changing rooms, private change spaces and lockers.
- Reception area.

Students love coming to *Dance Lab* as it is a place where they can “hang out” with their dance friends, have meals or study between classes.

Our receptionists ensure not only a warm welcome but can provide the information and answers you may need.