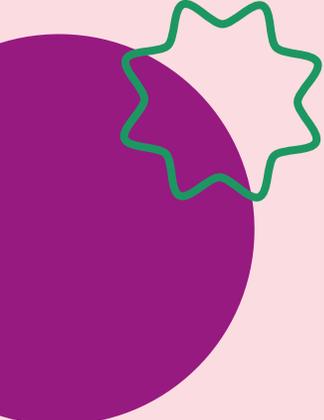




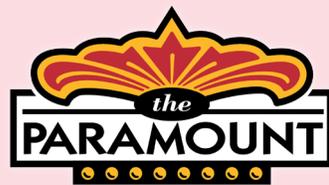
A FAIRY TALE GATHERING

PERFORMANCE GUIDE



THE PARAMOUNT THEATER

ARTS EDUCATION



215 East Main Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902



charlottesville ballet

Study Guide

A Fairy Tale Gathering™

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About

Charlottesville Ballet

Charlottesville Ballet is a professional ballet company, dance academy, and 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in Charlottesville, VA. The company was founded in 2007 by Sara Clayborne and Emily Hartka with a unique mission for dancer wellness to celebrate artists of all body types and backgrounds. Charlottesville Ballet is the only full time professional dance company in the area and is the Resident Dance Company of Lynchburg at the Academy Center of the Arts.

The Ballet is committed to promoting wellness and providing access to dance education for all in Central Virginia. More information about the company, academy, and engagement programming is available at www.CharlottesvilleBallet.org.

Our Mission

To elevate the art of dance through wellness, performance, education, and community outreach.

Ballet at a Glance

Professional Company

- Typically comprised of 20 dancers from all over the United States and abroad – from Virginia to California, Brazil to Japan
- 45+ performances per year across the state; classical ballets, family series productions, and new commissioned works to tell the stories of our time

Charlottesville Ballet Academy (CBA)

- The official training school of Charlottesville Ballet, opened in July 2011
- A nonprofit center for dance education serving over 975 students ages 2-adult throughout Central Virginia; 180+ classes per week in all dance genres
- Provides an in-kind value of \$280K in scholarships and financial aid each year

CB Moves - Free Community Engagement Programs

- Chance To Dance (C2D) outreach program for grades K-5 with a lifetime scholarship program for classes at CBA
- Movement For Parkinson's weekly class for participants with movement disorders and their care partners
- Silver Swans program for seniors in partnership with The Center at Belvedere
- Adaptive Dance classes that explore the joy of dance for students with Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, or any other developmental or intellectual disabilities
- Once Upon A Ballet and other free programming for schools, libraries, and the community across the state of Virginia



Meet the Dancers



Say Ayers

Say is from North Carolina and began dancing at the age of three. She began her professional training at twelve years old studying ballet, modern, tap, jazz, and contemporary under the instruction of Kat Daniel, Willie Hinton, and April Schweitzer. She also performed with the Carolina Ballet under Robert Weiss in *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. After high school, Say began a trainee program with the U.S. International Ballet. She studied Luigi jazz technique, Graham modern technique, and ballet technique under Debora Berger and Nancy Podrasky. She then joined Charlottesville Ballet and spent two years as a Trainee. She also works with the ballet's development team as a Development Assistant. Say is thrilled to return for her fourth year as a Company Artist this season.



Luigie A. Barrera

Luigie began his dance training at 13 in ballet, contemporary, modern, and folk dance. At 15, he became a finalist at the 2011 NAMCYA, won the 2013 ABAP Competition, and placed 2nd runner-up at the 2018 CCP Ballet Competition. He earned multiple Honors and Distinction Awards from the Australian Conservatoire of Ballet. At 19, he joined Ballet Philippines, performing soloist roles such as the Toy Soldier in *The Nutcracker*, Franz in *Coppélia*, and Lankendem in *Le Corsaire*, and was often cast in lead roles in contemporary works like *Payaso Blanco*. In 2023, he was scouted as a soloist with Springfield Ballet Company and later joined Dissonance Dance Theatre as Dance Artist, Junior Ballet Master, and Rehearsal Associate. He currently teaches for one of the Philippines' leading dance companies and works with various schools nationwide to share his knowledge and passion for dance.



Jeanne Berthy

Jeanne was born in Paris, France, and moved to Virginia when she was a year old. She began dancing with the Charlottesville Ballet Academy at the age of three when it opened in 2011. Since then, she has performed in numerous professional productions with the Charlottesville Ballet, trained in their Pre-Professional Program, joined the Trainee Program in 2020, and she's excited to be joining the company as a Company Artist for her third season! She also works as a CBA Faculty Member, teaching the Academy's students and giving back to the programs that shaped her as a dancer. Jeanne is looking forward to an exciting academic year and season ahead.



Gabriella Fedewa

Gabriella began her training at the age of three at the River Raisin School of the Arts under the guidance of Gail Choate-Petit, Melissa Moore, and Karen Keith. She studied the Cecchetti method and completed her Grade 6 ballet exam. She also performed lead roles in ballets including *The Nutcracker*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, and *Coppélia*, among others. Gabriella attended several summer intensives such as Orlando Ballet, Charlotte Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, Texas Ballet Theater, Cincinnati Ballet, and Tampa City Ballet. She received a BFA in Dance with a Concentration in Ballet from the University of South Florida and was awarded a General Business Certificate. During her time at USF, she was instructed by Paula Nunez, Andrew Carroll, Bliss Kohlmyer, Andee Scott, Sadie Lehmker, John Parks, and Jeanne Travers. Gabriella also works as a CBA Faculty Member and assists at the front desk. This is her first year as a Company Artist with Charlottesville Ballet.

Meet the Dancers

Eden Heille



Eden started dancing at the age of eight in Minneapolis, MN and mainly trained at Ashley Ballet Arts Academy in Golden Valley, MN as a pre-professional student. Eden spent her summers training at Boston Ballet, Ballet West, San Francisco Ballet, and Tulsa Ballet. In 2021, Eden attended University of Utah's inaugural Choreographic Institute performing new works by Christina Ghiardi, Jamal White, Jenelle Figgins, and James Kopecky. Eden joined Tulsa Ballet as a Trainee in 2019, and Twin Cities Ballet as an Apprentice from 2021-23. She joined Charlottesville Ballet as a Trainee in the 2023-24 season, was promoted to the company in February 2024, and is excited to return for her second full season as a Company Artist. She has performed lead roles in *The Nutcracker*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, *Le Corsaire*, *Dracula*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Cinderella*, *Paquita*, *Giselle*, and *Raymonda*. Eden also serves on faculty at Charlottesville Ballet Academy and loves to share the joy that dance brings to students of all ages.

Yui Kaito



Yui is originally from Tokyo, Japan. Yui began her training at Tateda Ballet Studio before moving to Calgary to complete her education at the Alberta Ballet School. While at Alberta Ballet School, Yui passed the Cecchetti Advanced 2 examination and was invited to join the Alberta Ballet Trainee Program, which led to her dancing with Alberta Ballet. After graduating from school, she joined Kentucky Ballet Theatre in Lexington, KY where she performed leading roles. In 2022, she joined Charlottesville Ballet as a Company Artist and teacher at Charlottesville Ballet Academy.

Edgardo Lacaba



Edgardo started his dance training in ballet, contemporary, and folk dance with Teatro Baile de Cavite and Dance Theatre Arts Philippines under Brezhnev Larlar and Pamela Ortiz-Bondoc. He has placed in numerous ballet competitions across the Philippines, receiving a gold medal in the 2015 Association of Ballet Academies Philippines senior division and placing as a finalist in the 2018 Cultural Center of the Philippines Ballet Competition's senior division. In 2017, Edgardo joined Ballet Philippines, the country's leading dance institution, and performed in many classical and modern full-length productions by leading choreographers. Edgardo came to the United States in 2023 to dance with Springfield Ballet Company as a soloist under Adam Sage's direction. He also assists with facilities management at the Ballet's studios. This is Edgardo's second season as a Company Artist with Charlottesville Ballet.

Isaac Lee



Isaac started dancing at age five with Park District Dance Arts in Champaign, IL. He completed his ballet training with Champaign Ballet Academy under Deanna Doty, while performing in Champaign Urbana Ballet's full length productions of *Coppélia*, *Cinderella*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*. After graduating, Isaac joined Nashville Ballet as a Trainee for two seasons before being promoted to Second Company for a third. While there he was coached by Anaïs Chalendard, worked with esteemed contemporary choreographers Charlotte Boye-Christensen and Maria Konrad, and performed in Paul Vasterling's *The Firebird*, *Peter Pan*, and *Cinderella*. Isaac went on to join Grand Rapids Ballet as an Apprentice, dancing soloist roles in Val Caniparoli's *The Nutcracker*, learning Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room*, and choreographing for their Jumpstart Program. This is Isaac's second season as a Company Artist with Charlottesville Ballet, and additionally teaches with CBA!

Meet the Dancers



Daniel Miller

Daniel began performing in community musical theatre productions as a young teen, but didn't begin training in ballet until the age of fifteen. He then studied around the Southeast with companies such as the Professional Training Program of Terminus Modern Ballet in Atlanta, GA, and in Richmond, VA as a Trainee with Richmond Ballet. When he is not onstage, Daniel is often in the lighting booth or working backstage in a theater, frequently at our Academy productions. Daniel has created lighting designs for shows across the US, winning awards at regional and international competitions. He joined the Charlottesville Ballet as a Company Artist in 2023, and has also served as lighting designer for Charlottesville Ballet Academy performances. Daniel would like to thank his mother for passing on her love for dance to him and inspiring him every day to keep pushing and never give up.



Catherine Spurduto

Catherine, from Long Island, NY, received her foundational training at the Lynch School of Ballet under the direction of Karen Lynch. After graduating from high school, Catherine continued her dance education by joining American Repertory Ballet as a trainee. During her time at ARB, she trained closely with esteemed ballet figures such as Kirk Peterson, Maria Youskevitch, Anna Navoa, Douglas Martin, and Katherine Moore, and had the opportunity to perform with the company. Catherine later joined Roanoke Ballet Theatre under the direction of Rolando Sarabia and Sandra Meythaler, where she danced featured roles including Mina in Dracula, the Sugar Plum Fairy in The Nutcracker, the Peasant Pas de Deux in Giselle, Paquita in Paquita, and brought to life Alice in Rolando Sarabia's original production of Alice in Wonderland. She also serves as a CBA Faculty Member and administrative assistant at the front desk. Catherine is very excited to be dancing her first season with Charlottesville Ballet as a company member.



Kathryn Tokar Conley

Kathryn began training with Melanie Szucs at the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood, OH. She spent summers at Cincinnati Ballet, Next Generation Ballet, and ABT, and graduated from Mercyhurst University summa cum laude with a B.A. in Dance Performance and a minor in Biology. Under the direction of Tauna Hunter at MU, Kathryn performed at the YAGP Finals and the NYCDA Destiny Rising Gala. She began her professional career as a founding member of Cleveland Ballet and went on to dance for Lake Erie Ballet, then directed by her mentor Lesley Bories-Scalise. Kathryn joined Charlottesville Ballet in 2017 as a Trainee and will be performing in her ninth season with CB as a Company Artist. She also performs with Deos Contemporary Ballet in Michigan over the summers. Her favorite roles include Arabian (The Nutcracker), Stepsister (Cinderella), and Princess Katerina (The Firebird) as well as various contemporary works and original choreography that she has been honored to create with live music collaborators. Kathryn also serves as CB Moves Coordinator and helps lead the Movement For Parkinson's program at Charlottesville Ballet. She holds a master's degree in Arts in Medicine through the University of Florida.

Meet the Dancers

Trainee Artists



Hannah Adamczak

Hannah trained with Flint Youth Ballet under Karen Mills Jennings, working with the Balanchine Trust, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and other notable artists. She performed annually in The Nutcracker with live orchestra. Hannah earned her BFA in Ballet from the University of Cincinnati-CCM, graduating Summa Cum Laude in 2023. While in school, she danced as a soloist with Springfield Ballet Company and has since performed with Dissonance Dance Theatre and taught at Berwyn Ballet School. Her repertoire includes works by George Balanchine, Amy Seiwert, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Adam Sage, and Qi Jiang. Notable roles include the title role in The Little Mermaid, Clara and Dew Drop in The Nutcracker, The Russian Girl in Serenade, and the title role of Paquita including the Grand Pas De Deux. She also serves as a CBA Faculty Member and administrative assistant at the front desk. Hannah is thrilled to begin her first season as a Trainee with Charlottesville Ballet.



Simone Ayers

Simone is from Bassett, VA and recently graduated magna cum laude from Point Park University with a BFA in Dance, concentrating in ballet and a minor in behavioral sciences. Before college, she trained for many years with Southwest Virginia Ballet under the direction of Pedro Szalay, where she developed a strong classical foundation. While at Point Park, she performed in works by renowned choreographers including George Balanchine, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Paul Taylor, Marius Petipa, Yoshiaki Nakano, Julia Erickson, Roni Koresh, and Houston Thomas. Simone is passionate about both the discipline and artistry of ballet and is continually inspired by the collaborative process of dance. She is deeply grateful for the unwavering love and support of her family and friends. This will be Simone's first season with Charlottesville Ballet.



Maureen Cole

Maureen, from Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, began ballet at age 3. She recently graduated from Hope College with a BA in Dance Performance & Choreography and Exercise Science. At Hope, she danced with H2 Dance Company under Matthew Farmer and Jasmine Mejia and choreographed and taught for the Ballet Club. She trained in ballet, jazz, modern, contemporary, and tap with instructors including Julie Powell, Kara Brems, Lindsey Hanson, and Heather Cornell. Maureen also trained with Macomb Ballet Company and Ann Parsley School of Dance, performing full-length ballets. Her ballet and pointe training includes work with Amber Megna Michalik, Sarah Komara, Brandon Koepsell, and others. She trained with Cincinnati Ballet in summer 2024. Performance highlights include Stretto, Pieces of HER, Due et Una, and Liminality, with several soloist roles. This is her first season with Charlottesville Ballet.



Zaiah Gray

Zaiah was born in Bluff City, TN, and started ballet at the age of three. After training consistently throughout childhood, he took a four-year break from ballet during high school to focus on other forms of performance and personal growth. In the spring of 2024, returning with renewed passion, performed as a guest dancer with Bristol Ballet and became a company member of Southern Appalachian Dance Collective. Some of his favorite roles include the Nutcracker in The Nutcracker and the Mad Hatter in Alice in Wonderland. He also serves as a CBA teaching assistant. This will be Zaiah's first season with Charlottesville Ballet!

Meet the Dancers

Trainee Artists



Mina Hyndman

Mina, from North Central Jersey started her strict ballet training at 14 due to her desire to inspire young people and her community. She found that ballet could allow her to pursue this dream while enjoying her passion. At 15, she began performing with the Mill Ballet School in New Hope, PA, showcasing many styles. Her ballet performances included roles in The Nutcracker, Cinderella, Peter Pan, and Sleeping Beauty. To further her development, she joined the Charlottesville Ballet this season as a Trainee, marking a significant step in her ongoing dance journey.



Rhian Jones

Rhian is from New Hartford, Connecticut and began her ballet training at the age of 4 with The Nutmeg Ballet Conservatory in Connecticut, where she trained year-round for 14 years. She also attended summer intensives at Washington Ballet, Ballet Rhode Island, and the Maritime Conservatory of Dance. During her time at Nutmeg, Rhian was coached by renowned instructors such as Eleanor D'Antuono and performed leading roles including Sugar Plum and Adult Clara in The Nutcracker, Princess Florine in The Sleeping Beauty, and Swanhilda in Coppélia. Rhian has danced as an Apprentice with New York State Ballet and is excited for her first season with Charlottesville!



Ayana Leblans

Ayana began her ballet training in her hometown of California, Maryland at Ballet Caliente Classical School of Dance. After high school she continued her training at Goucher College as a Dance major with a concentration in Arts Administration and a minor in Business Management, graduating summa cum laude and winning the Friends of Goucher Dance Prize for Outstanding Achievement in the Major. While in college, she performed with Ballet Ashani and Charm City Ballet, as well as in works choreographed by students, faculty, and guest artists with the Goucher Repertory Dance Ensemble. Ayana spent summers training with the Royal Danish Ballet School, the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School, Dance Theatre of Harlem, The Washington School of Ballet, CityDance Conservatory, Goucher College, and Dance Base U.K., attending several of these programs on scholarship. She also serves as a CBA Faculty Member, administrative assistant at the front desk, and development assistant. Ayana is returning to Charlottesville Ballet for her second season as a Trainee.



Ryland Mettee

Originally from Asheville, NC, Ryland has been dancing since the age of three. She began her training at The Ballet Conservatory of Asheville and has attended summer programs with companies including Carolina Ballet, Orlando Ballet, Nashville Ballet, and City Ballet of San Diego. She graduated from Point Park University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance with a Concentration in Ballet. She has danced with Virginia National Ballet as a Trainee and spent this past summer season as an Apprentice with Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance. This will be her second season as a Trainee with Charlottesville Ballet.

Meet the Dancers

Trainee Artists



Nanako Mizuno

Nanako is originally from Nagoya, Japan and started ballet at the age of three, beginning her training at the Reiko Matsuoka Ballet School. Over the years, she graced the stage in beloved classics including *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*, as well as numerous pas de deux. At 17, Nanako became a professional artist, and at 19, was honored with a scholarship to The Dallas Conservatory, where she continued her training and deepened her artistry and technique. Nanako's performances included cherished roles in *La Sylphide* and the iconic *Odette* in *Swan Lake*. This is Nanako's first season as a trainee with Charlottesville Ballet.



Adelyn Nicholson

Adelyn (Addy) began dancing at age six in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, training in ballet, pointe, contemporary, modern, tap, jazz, and acrobatics. She studied at Ballet Elite, DeCruz Ballet in San Antonio, and SoFlo Ballet Academy in Miami. She continues training with renowned dancers Taras Domitro and Adarys Almeida at Hollywood Ballet Academy. Addy has attended summer intensives with Boston Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, DeCruz Ballet, Hollywood Ballet Academy, and Point Park University's International Summer Dance. She also serves as a Marketing Assistant for the Ballet's Marketing Team. She has cherished her first season as a Charlottesville Ballet Trainee and is honored and excited to return for a second season.



Dashiell Pledger-Levine

Dashiell was born in Charlottesville, VA but later moved with his family to Charlotte, NC. At age ten, "Dash" enrolled in the Boys Dance program at Charlotte Ballet Academy where he studied with Sarkis Kaltakchian under the artistic leadership of Patricia McBride and Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux. He also appeared in multiple Charlotte Ballet productions during this time, most notably *The Little Mermaid*, and several iterations of *The Nutcracker*, most recently in *Gopak*. In addition to ballet, Dashiell has a passion for musical theatre and appeared as Leroy Herdman in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, the Musical at Children's Theatre of Charlotte, and as a featured dancer in Newsies at CPCC Summer Theatre. If you want to catch a glimpse of a nine-year old Dash, see if you can find Norman Rockwell's *Shuffleton's Barbershop* on the Hallmark Movie Channel. He's the one acting alongside Danny Glover. He also serves as a CBA teaching assistant. Dashiell is thrilled to return to his hometown to train with Charlottesville Ballet.



Alyssa Robey

Alyssa grew up in Virginia Beach, VA and began her dance training at age three. She later joined Music in Motion Dance Studio where she trained for twelve years. From late 2021-2023, Alyssa trained at Todd Rosenlieb Dance in Norfolk, VA and performed for three seasons in their pre-professional ensembles: Virginia Ballet Theatre (ballet) and TRDance (modern/contemporary). In 2023, Alyssa began dancing with the Artistic Movements Initiative and spent two seasons performing with the AMI Dance Studio Company. In 2024, Alyssa joined Charlottesville Ballet as a Trainee and CBA faculty member. During the 2024-2025 season, she performed in *The Nutcracker*, *The Firebird*, and *Momentum*. Since 2021, Alyssa has taught various styles of dance to students of many ages. She now teaches in the Charlottesville Ballet Academy, where she loves sharing her passion with young dancers. Alyssa is thrilled to return for her second season as a trainee and faculty member with Charlottesville Ballet.

Meet the Dancers

Trainee Artists



Ellie Vazquez

Ellie began dancing at the age of ten in her hometown of Spotsylvania, Virginia. At the age of thirteen, she began her classical ballet training at Avery Ballet under the direction of Lisa Snape Avery. Ellie has also trained under Kori Joseph, Jennifer Ruhl Kubilus, Amber Rose, and Emma Atkinson. Avery Ballet's instructors instilled in Ellie a deep sense of artistry, passion, and integrity. Ellie also had the opportunities to spend summers training at the Charlottesville Ballet and the Joffrey Ballet School. Furthermore, she was selected to participate in the Kennedy Center Ballet Masterclass series for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 seasons and was selected to perform solo works at performing arts festivals held in Fredericksburg. Ellie is incredibly excited to be a trainee with the Charlottesville Ballet for the 2025-2026 season!



Meet the Staff

Emily Hartka

Director/Co-Founder & Choreographer

Emily fell in love with ballet at the age of five in her hometown of Roanoke, VA and began dance classes at Roanoke Ballet Theatre, then continued her training with Unurbat Gunaajav and Michele Goacher. She played violin in the Roanoke Youth Symphony and performed dance roles in collaborative shows with Opera Roanoke, Mill Mountain Theatre, and Radford University. Emily attended summer intensives at the Richmond Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and on scholarship with the Dance Theatre of Harlem. She spent her senior year of high school at the Virginia School of the Arts in Lynchburg, VA under the late Petrus Bosman, and then danced as a trainee at Richmond Ballet. Emily later relocated to Charlottesville to co-found Charlottesville Ballet and attend the University of Virginia, where she earned an interdisciplinary degree in Nonprofit Management & Arts Administration. She performed in CB's professional company throughout its first decade and retired from the stage in 2018. Emily is a member of the 2025 class of Lead Virginia and continues to lead the Ballet's marketing and development efforts while fostering collaborations with nonprofit and performing arts partners. She is deeply grateful to all who have made this 18-year journey possible!

Sara Clayborne

Director/Co-Founder

Originally from New York, Sara Clayborne is a choreographer, educator, and arts leader known for her dedication to artistic excellence, dancer wellness, and community engagement. She trained at the Ballet School of New York under Diana Byer and Sallie Wilson and began her professional career in 2001 with New York Theatre Ballet. After joining the Richmond Ballet trainee program in 2004, she expanded her contemporary dance experience with Starr Foster Dance Project. In 2007, she co-founded Charlottesville Ballet, where she performed as a founding company artist and now serves as Director. Her choreography, including a full-length *Firebird*, blends classical technique with narrative innovation, shaping the company's distinctive repertoire. Since retiring from the stage in 2013, Sara has focused on leadership, directing both Charlottesville Ballet and its affiliated school, Charlottesville Ballet Academy. She is an American Ballet Theatre® Certified Teacher and integrates the ABT® National Training Curriculum throughout the organization. A graduate of the Community Investment Collaborative (CIC) entrepreneurship program and former CIC board member, she also mentors local business owners. Through her work across education, choreography, and advocacy, Sara remains committed to cultivating the next generation of dancers and broadening access to the performing arts.



Caitlin Lennon

Artistic Associate & Director of Repertoire

Caitlin Lennon, originally from Bozeman, MT, began her intensive training at the Queen City Ballet in Helena, MT. She spent her summers studying at Juilliard, American Ballet Theatre in New York, Atlanta Ballet, Houston Ballet, and Ballet West on scholarship. Her travels across the country ended at the Richmond Ballet, where she was accepted into the trainee program on full scholarship and danced for two seasons. She also taught dance in the public schools with Richmond Ballet's Minds In Motion program from 2007-2015. In 2008, Caitlin joined the Charlottesville Ballet as a founding member of the professional company. From 2015-2019, Caitlin worked as the Company Manager for the professional company, in addition to continuing her performances as a dancer. In March of 2019, Caitlin retired from the stage and accepted the role of Director of Repertoire, continuing her work with the professional company and trainee program. In addition to her work with the Ballet, Caitlin is a licensed Realtor® in the state of Virginia. Caitlin is looking forward to her 18th season with Charlottesville Ballet!

Cordelaine Klyne

Stage Manager & Operations Manager

Originally from Marshall, VA, Cordelaine began their dance training at the age of three. They studied under Cynthia Kiehna at Virginia Civic Ballet, and they are certified through Grade 7 in the Cecchetti Council of America syllabus. Cordelaine graduated from the University of Virginia, receiving a major in Commerce with concentrations in Marketing and Management and a minor in Dance. Cordelaine had the honor of being named a J. Sanford Miller Family Arts Scholar for dance. In 2021, they started as a summer intern with Charlottesville Ballet and have worked as an Administrative Assistant, Academy Manager, and Stage Manager over the past three years. In 2024, Cordelaine was promoted to Operations Manager for the entire organization, and they also continue their role as Stage Manager making magic happen from backstage!

Ty Cooper Grace

Artistic Associate & Costumes Coordinator

Ty began dance instruction at Woodside High School for the Performing Arts and Communications and the Eastern Virginia Schools of the Performing Arts under the instruction of Dr. Mary Ann Laverty and Sandra Ballastrachi. After graduation, Ty pursued a B.F.A. in Dance & Choreography from Virginia Commonwealth University while also dancing as a Trainee with Richmond Ballet. Ty has performed at the Black College Dance Festival, the American Dance Festival, and as a guest artist with EDGEWORKS Dance Theater, the Starr Foster Dance Project and Keith Lee Dances. Ty is a founding member of Charlottesville Ballet and is a member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance. He currently serves the organization as the Facilities/Costumes Coordinator, CB Moves/CBA Faculty as well as an Artistic Associate.



A Brief Ballet History

ITALY

Ballet began a long time ago in the royal courts of Italy. A woman named Catherine de Medici loved dancing, music, and art. When she moved to France to marry King Henry II, she brought ballet with her. Because her family supported the arts, ballet began to grow and become more important.

FRANCE

About 100 years later, ballet became even more popular in France. King Louis XIV, also called the “Sun King,” loved to dance!

During his time, dancers started writing down the steps and rules of ballet so they could be taught and shared. Many ballet words we use today—like plié and pirouette—come from French.

RUSSIA

Later on, ballet became very famous in Russia. A choreographer (a dance maker) named Marius Petipa worked with a composer (a music writer) named Pyotr Tchaikovsky.

Together, they created three of the world’s most beloved ballets:

- The Nutcracker
- Swan Lake
- Sleeping Beauty

Music from The Nutcracker, Swan Lake and Sleeping Beauty can be heard in Emily Hartka’s A Fairy Tale Gathering™!

AMERICA

Ballet came to the Colonies as early as 1735, but it didn’t become popular in America until the early 1900s. Many dancers and teachers brought their knowledge from Europe to share with new students here. Soon, ballet schools and companies grew across the country. Today, American ballet blends traditions from around the world and celebrates dancers of every background and ability.



Vocabulary

Roles at the Ballet

Choreographer: Person who makes up the dance moves and tells the dancers what to do

Composer: Person who writes music

Key Composers in A Fairy Tale Gathering™ include:

- Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky
- Sergei Prokofiev
- Léo Delibes
- Otto Nicolai

Costume Designer: Person who creates the clothes that dancers or actors wear on stage

Lighting Designer: Person who decides how the lights on stage should look; they can make the stage bright, dark, or colorful to match the story and characters.

Stage Manager: Person who helps run the show; they make sure everyone knows what to do and when to do it so the performance goes smoothly

Artistic Director: Person who helps lead the dance company; they choose the dances, guide the dancers, and make sure the show looks its very best

Rehearsal Director/Ballet Master/Mistress: Person who teaches the dancers the steps of a ballet and helps the dancers practice their steps and get ready for the show



Ballet Terminology

Five positions of the feet: The special ways that dancers stand where their legs and feet are “turned out” or rotated open from the hips

Plié: To bend the knees

Relevé: To rise up on the toes or balls of the feet

Port de bras: Arm movements

Pas de deux: “Dance for two”; when a male and female dancer partner together

Reverence: A formal “thank you” or bow that dancers do at the end of a ballet class or performance to thank their teachers, audience, and fellow dancers

A Fairy Tale Gathering™

Synopsis

Charlottesville Ballet's A Fairy Tale Gathering™ is a short, 45-minute ballet made just for kids. It was created by Emily Hartka when she was a student at the University of Virginia.

Come join the Fairy Godmother for a magical tea party with your favorite fairy-tale characters dancing on stage. During the show, you'll get to stand up and try simple ballet steps, listen to beautiful music, and have lots of fun.

You'll meet Cinderella as she dreams of going to the ball. You can help the Prince wake up Sleeping Beauty. You'll also see Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and many other characters. It's a perfect way to enjoy the magic of dance!



A Fairy Tale Gathering™

Meet the Characters

Fairy Godmother

The narrator of this interactive ballet, and the host of the magical tea party!

Kitty

Fairy Godmother's pet cat and trusty assistant (though she sometimes gets distracted by mice)

Mrs. Teapot

Fairy Godmother's friend who helps prepare the tea for her guests!

Tea Party Guests:

Cinderella

Red Riding Hood

The Big Bad Wolf

The Sugar Plum Fairy (from The Nutcracker ballet)

Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum

Snow White

The Seven Dwarfs

Sleeping Beauty

Prince Charming



Cinderella, Snow White & the Dwarfs, Sleeping Beauty & Prince Charming, and Red Riding Hood & the Wolf are probably familiar to you from fairy tales and Disney movies—but did you know they are all characters in their own classical ballets, too?

Cinderella (1948)

Original Choreographer:
Sir Frederick Ashton
Composer: Sergei
Prokofiev

Snow White (1970)

Original Choreographer:
Witold Borkowski
Composer: Bogdan
Pawłowski

The Sleeping Beauty (1890)

Original Choreographer:
Marius Petipa
Composer: Pyotr Illyich
Tchaikovsky

For Students & Families

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

MOVE TO MUSIC

Play a short excerpt of the ballet's music.

Ask: How does it make your body want to move?

LET STUDENTS MOVE FREELY

Introduce tempo with the ballet's music: Practice moving slow versus fast, and freezing/holding a pose when the music stops!

ACT OUT THE CHARACTERS

Have students pretend to be each of the characters.

Ask: What does the character look like? What does the character like to do? How does the character feel? How fast or slow does the character move?

DRAW THE STAGE AND/OR COSTUMES

Have students imagine what they think the stage set will look like and draw it. Encourage them to think about the lights, scenery, and dancers.

Have students draw a character in their costume as they imagine they will look. Simple paper doll outlines also work great; students can then color and decorate a costume over this outline.

CREATE A HEADPIECE

Have students make a simple craft—mouse or cat ears, tiara, paper crown—to connect to the characters they'll see.

PRACTICE BALLET ETIQUETTE

- Do a mini “pretend theater”:
- Practice sitting quietly
- Listening to music
- Clapping at the end or when you see an impressive movie
- Not talking during the performance
- Make it fun (“Freeze like a statue when the lights go down!”)
- Use puppets or stuffed animals: One shows good theater behavior, one shows silly behavior; let students identify what's helpful or not.

FEELINGS CHECK-IN

- Ask how students feel about seeing the ballet: excited, nervous, curious? Discuss what dancers use to tell the story—movement, music, costumes, expression.

“WHAT IS BALLET?” CHART

- Create a class chart with simple ideas students already know or guess about ballet. Add to it after the performance.



For Students & Families

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

MAP OUT THE STORY

As a class, order the key events in the story with relevant comments, questions and actions. Draw a footpath on a long roll of paper to create the journey of the characters. Start the roll with the opening of the story—Fairy Godmother in her garden—and ask the children to recall key events that happen in the ballet. Draw these along the path finishing with the end of the story.

Questions to help guide students:

- Can you name all the characters in the story?
- What did they do?
- What were the exciting parts of the story?
- What were the funny parts of the story?
- How did the story end?

REVIEW BALLET TERMINOLOGY/STEPS

Use a simple game, like Simon Says, to have students practice the basic terms they learned during the ballet:

- First position
- Plié
- Relevé

CONNECT TO THE CHARACTERS:

Ask: If you could ask one of the characters a question, what would it be and which character would you ask? Imagine their life at the end of the ballet. What do you think happens next for them?

Spin-off Story: Have students create their own story about one of the characters—perhaps what they did before or after Fairy Godmother’s tea party!

Write a Thank You Note to Fairy Godmother: Have students write a letter to Fairy Godmother thanking her for inviting them to her tea party and telling her what their favorite part of the day was.

FEELINGS CHECK-IN

Questions for students:

- What do you think it feels like to be a dancer on stage?
- Do you think you could dance on stage, too?
- How did the dancers tell the story without words? (Discuss how the music, set design, and costumes also contribute to the story.)
- There are lots of other team members working on a ballet behind the scenes (choreographer, lighting designer, stage manager, costume designer, etc.). Do you think you might like to give any of these jobs a try?
- What was your favorite part of the performance? What was your least favorite part? Why?

“WHAT IS BALLET?” CHART

Add to the chart you created after the performance with students’ new knowledge.

For Educators

SOL ALIGNMENT CHECKLIST

This study guide is designed to enrich student engagement before, during, and after attending the Charlottesville Ballet performance at the Academy Center of the Arts. It provides ready-to-use worksheets for kindergarten students, aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning for Dance Arts.

Creative Process

- K.1 Students observed how movement communicated meaning and story.
- K.2 Students asked or responded to questions about dance, characters, or movement choices.

Critical Thinking and Communication

- K.3 Students described the performance using simple dance or movement vocabulary.
- K.4 Students shared personal reactions, favorite characters, or connections to the story.
- K.5 Students recognized that dancers worked alone and together to tell the story.

History, Culture, and Citizenship

- K.6 Students responded to dance works representing fairy tale stories and characters.
- K.7 Students identified reasons people dance (to tell stories, entertain, express feelings).

Innovation in the Arts

- K.9 Students recognized dance as an art form and profession.
- K.10 Students observed how music, lighting, narration, or stage effects supported the dance.
- K.11 Students recognized connections between dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.

Technique and Application

- K.12 Students identified body shapes and body parts used in dance.
- K.13 Students recognized locomotor and non-locomotor movements.
- K.14 Students observed dancers using personal and general space.
- K.15 Students recognized changes in rhythm and tempo.
- K.16 Students identified different movement energies (soft, strong, magical).
- K.17 Students followed and observed safe movement and audience behavior.
- K.18 Students recognized ballet as a style of dance.

Optional Evidence of Learning (Check all that apply)

- Class discussion
- Drawing or reflection activity
- Movement exploration
- Verbal responses
- Teacher observation notes

For Educators

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

(Use before attending the performance to activate imagination and prior knowledge)

- What is a fairy tale? Can you name one you already know?
- How do you think dancers can tell a story without using words?
- What kinds of movements might a fairy godmother use? A prince? A princess?
- How do you think music helps tell a story in a dance?
- What should we remember about being a respectful audience during a performance?

Optional Movement Extension

(Great for Classrooms or at Home)

- Can you move like the Fairy Godmother using slow, gentle movements?
- Can you show how Cinderella feels before and after the ball?
- Can you freeze in a “fairy tale pose” and make a shape with your body?

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

(Use after the performance)

- Which fairy tale character was your favorite? Why?
- How did the dancers show feelings like happiness, excitement, or magic?
- Did you see dancers moving alone and dancing together? How were they different?
- How did the music change for different characters or scenes?
- What kinds of movements did you notice? (Jumping, turning, walking, posing?)
- How did the dancers use space on the stage?
- How did costumes, music, or lighting help make the story feel magical?
- Why do you think people choose to dance and tell stories through movement?
- What was one moment that made you smile or feel excited?
- If you could dance like one character from the performance, who would you choose?

For Educators

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD...

KNOW

Students will know that:

- Dance is an art form that can tell stories without words.
- Ballet uses movement, music, costumes, and storytelling together
- Dancers can move alone or in groups to show characters and ideas.
- Dance can show feelings such as happiness, excitement, magic, and surprise.
- People dance for many reasons, including storytelling and entertainment.
- Ballet dancers are professional artists.

UNDERSTAND

Students will understand that:

- Movement can communicate meaning, characters, and emotions
- Music, rhythm, and tempo help shape how a story feels.
- Different movements can show different characters and moods
- Dance works best when performers work together.

- Dance connects to other art forms like music, theatre, and visual art

- Being an audience member means watching respectfully and safely.

DO

Students will be able to:

- Describe what they saw in the performance using simple movement or dance words.
- Share personal reactions and favorite moments from the ballet.
- Identify basic movements such as walking, jumping, turning, and posing.
- Recognize changes in movement speed, energy, and space.
- Respond creatively by moving like a fairy tale character.
- Follow audience etiquette and participate safely in movement activities.
- Ask and answer questions about how the story was told through dance.

SOL Alignment (Kindergarten)

Virginia Dance Arts Standards of Learning

K.1, K.2, K.3, K.4, K.5, K.6, K.7, K.9, K.10, K.11, K.12-K.18

A Fairy Tale Gathering™ Worksheet

Use this worksheet to show your favorite parts of the ballet and what you learned!

👁️ I Went to See a Ballet

(Circle or point to how the ballet made you feel:)

😊 Happy

😮 Surprised

✨ Magical

😌 Calm

❤️ Loved it

👣 My Favorite Character Was:
(Circle one or draw your own)

👑 Cinderella

🪄 Fairy Godmother

🛌 Sleeping Beauty

🍏 Snow White

👣 Sugar Plum Fairy

👑 Prince Charming

🐺 Little Red Riding Hood

🎵 What Kind of Movements Did I See?

(Check off all that you saw)

Jumping Turning

Walking Stretching

Spinning Posing

🖍️ Draw Your Favorite Character

A Fairy Tale Gathering™ Worksheet

 **The Music Was:**
(Circle all that you heard)

 Slow

 Fast

 Soft

 Exciting

 **Let's Move Like the Ballet!**
(Try one and freeze like a statue!)

 Move like a fairy

 Walk like a prince or princess

 Float like magic in the air

 **My Favorite Part of
the Ballet**

(Draw what you remember most!)



 **I Was a Great
Audience Member**

(Check together)

I watched the dancers

I listened to the music

I sat safely

I clapped at the end

**THANK YOU FOR VISITING
US AND BEING A
SUPPORTER OF THE ARTS!**



charlottesville ballet

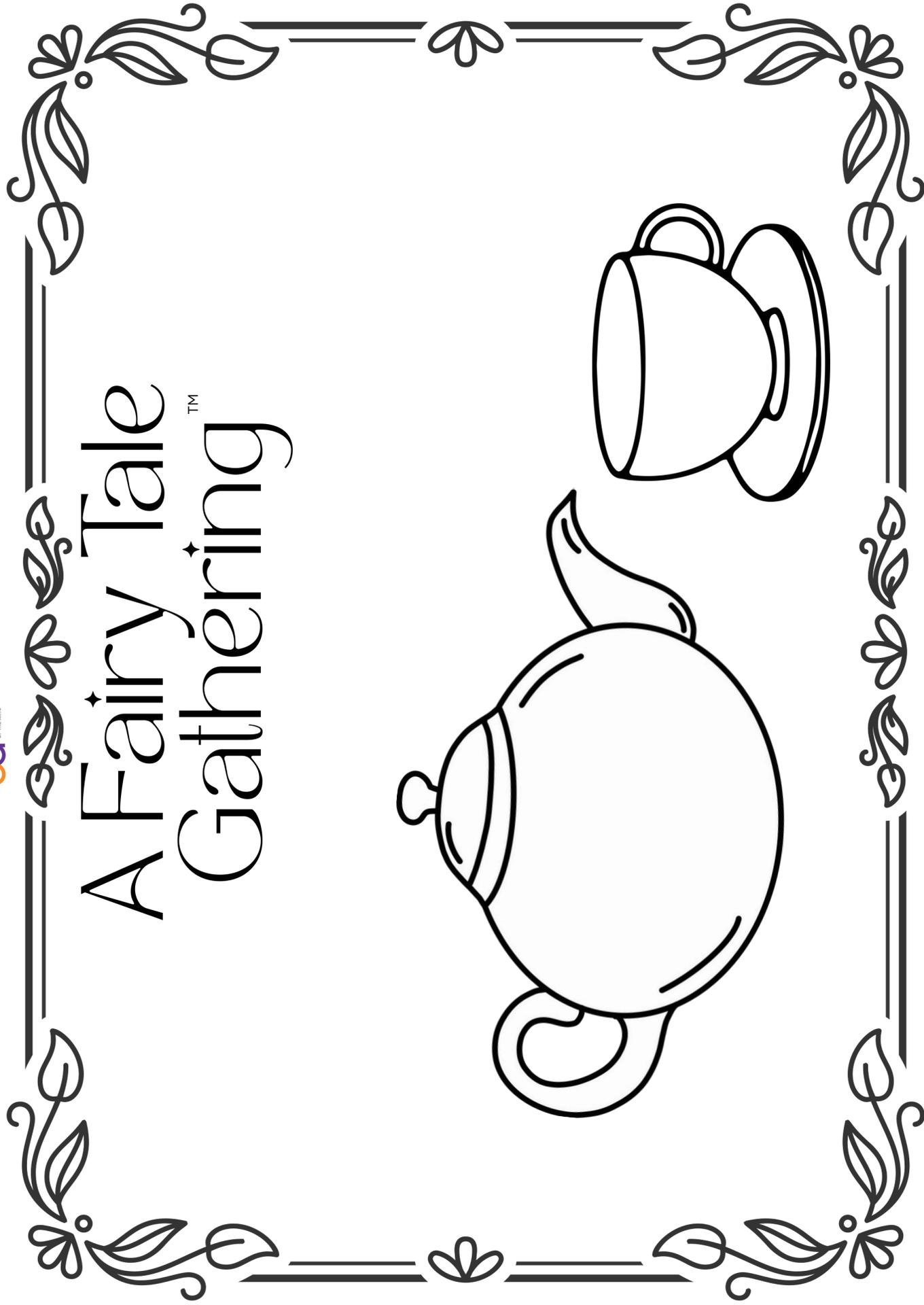
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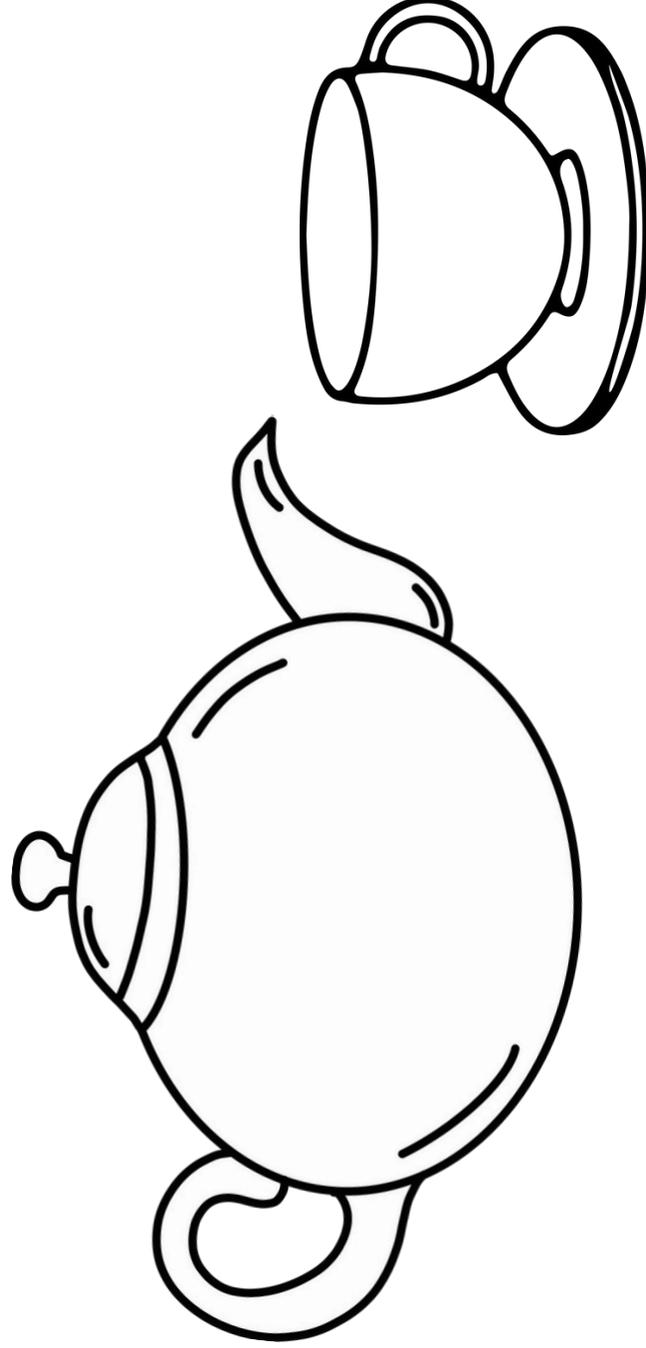
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