

DANCE ACADEMY

THEY'VE GOT THE WORLD AT THEIR FEET,
BUT HAVE THEY GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

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DANCE ACADEMY

ONE LINE SYNOPSIS

When Tara Webster leaves her home in the country to be a student at the National Academy of Dance she is sure all her dreams are about to come true, but does Tara have what it takes to make it in this high pressured world?

ONE PARAGRAPH SYNOPSIS

Fifteen-year-old Tara Webster has grown up on a farm in country Australia and has dreamt of being a dancer ever since she was a little girl. When she makes it into the National Academy of Dance – the best school in the country – she is sure her life is about to be spectacular. What Tara doesn't realise is how far behind she is in her training, and that there's a whole lot more to surviving the Academy than just dancing...

DANCE ACADEMY

ONE PAGE SYNOPSIS

When you're nearly 16 life is rarely simple. Your friends can suddenly not be your friends anymore, or you fall for someone who doesn't know you're alive and start memorising his timetable for 'strategical purposes'. There's that limbo feeling of knowing you're old enough to make your own decisions but everyone insists on treating you like a child. On that subject: what happened to your parents? When did they become the enemy?

There's enough to keep you on your toes in normal circumstances, but what if you were also living away from home at the country's top dance academy? What if you had to grow up and chase your dream at the same time?

Dance Academy is an exhilarating new drama series for children and young adults, and anyone, anywhere, who's ever had a dream.

It's through Tara Webster's eyes that we enter the world of the National Academy of Dance, where the best in the country train to become dancers. This is the year Tara will leave her home on the farm and go into boarding school in Sydney; the year she will fall in love for the first time and have her heart broken. It's a year of friendships and jealousies, triumphs and disappointments. This is the year she'll be tested. Does she have what it takes to be a dancer? Can she cope with the sacrifices she's required to make?

Fortunately, Tara's not alone in her journey... She's joined by carefree Kat (the daughter of dance world superstars) who couldn't care less about ballet and if Kat's stuck at boarding school she's going to cause as much mischief as possible. Then there's Kat's older brother, Ethan. Gorgeous and talented, he's the first guy Tara has ever fallen for. But will he always see her as just his sister's best friend?

And then there's rebellious Christian Reed who's from the wrong side of the tracks. He's an adrenaline junkie who likes skateboards more than ballet shoes, but with the raw potential to be a truly great dancer.

To round out the crew is loveable Sammy Lieberman, whose Jewish parents want their clever son to be a doctor, not a dancer. Sammy has a crush on ambitious Abigail Armstrong who is the best in the year and is not afraid to let everyone know it... especially Tara; the first real threat Abigail's ever had.

These teens are sweaty athletes not fragile butterflies; modern kids who constantly bump heads with the rules of an old-fashioned world. They want to dance but they're determined to have fun as well. Over the next year, against the stunning backdrop of Sydney Harbour, we will watch them battle through the minefield of elite dance training. Over the next year, they'll face the universal challenges of being a teenager. Relationships will grow and change as they live side by side in the Boarding House. They'll each take a different path, but they'll start to find out who they are and they'll all dare to chase their dreams.

The best in the Academy will one day join the National Ballet Company, but the students must master all forms of dancing. Whether it's Contemporary, Hip Hop, Tap, Funk or Acrobatics, the challenges they face make *So You Think You Can Dance* look easy. The stakes are high and none of the teens can forget that at the end of the year not everyone makes the cut. When it's judgment time, who will star in the end of year performance at the Sydney Opera House? Who will be told to not to come back next year?

Dance Academy is a series about a group of ordinary teenagers who are pushing themselves to the limit as they fight to achieve extraordinary things.

DANCE ACADEMY

THE CHARACTERS

Tara Webster

“I’ve always known that in another life I can fly.”

Tara grew up in the dry Mallee region of north western Victoria, riding trail bikes and horses. Although she learns to love Sydney she will always be a country girl at heart. She is happiest dancing barefoot, ideally somewhere in the middle of a wheat paddock, and finds it hard to adjust to life in a city Boarding House.

Tara is lucky enough to have been born with a body that’s almost perfectly suited to ballet; however she is so far behind in her training that the teachers have put her on probation. At any moment they could kick her out and Tara often feels like she’s hanging on by a thread, no matter how hard she tries. It takes her a long time to figure out that the teachers are pushing her so hard because they see her potential.

Tara has a heightened sense of awareness, which makes her feel things more acutely than other people and, at almost 16, life never seems easy. She’s particularly naïve when it comes to boys and relationships. When Tara falls, she falls hard and she’s excruciatingly honest about her feelings – frequently embarrassing herself as a result.

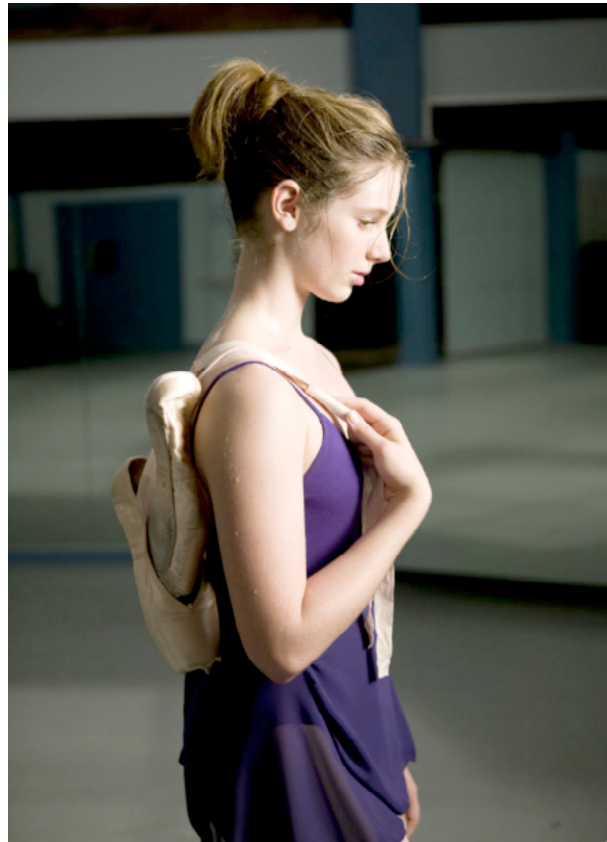
Tara lives in her head a lot of time and annoys herself by analysing everything. She knows she’s too introspective and often wishes she could be more like her friend Kat, who doesn’t take anything too seriously.

While sensitive and imaginative, Tara is also fiercely determined. She is stronger than she knows and over the course of the year draws on reserves she never thought she had. She might be naïve, but she’s nobody’s doormat. She’ll be pushed to a point and then come back fighting.

And this year Tara needs every ounce of strength she possesses. She has to battle homesickness and jealousy; a spiteful roommate and a teacher who seems to hate her. She has to deal with the feeling that she’s the worst dancer in the class and grapple with the desire to be an ordinary teenage girl. She falls in and out of love with disastrous results, and at one stage even has to choose between her family and her dream.

But the toughest challenge Tara faces this year is learning how to have faith in herself. Learning that the National Academy of Dance is where she belongs. Learning that whatever happens it will all be worth it. Knowing that just to dance is all that matters.

There are seeds of greatness inside Tara. Her challenge this year is to work out what to do with them.



DANCE ACADEMY

Katrina “Kat” Karamakov

“Help! I’m being held hostage in a ballet school. Send chocolate.”

16-year-old Kat isn't sure what she wants to do in the future but she does know there's more to life than dancing. If only her parents would realise it.

Kat's mother is the National Ballet Company's Principal ballerina and her father is an acclaimed choreographer. It's tough having celebrity parents and in the dance world this is as A-List as it gets.

Tired of travelling the world and lonely hotel rooms, Kat is pleased to find a home at the Academy. Just don't ask her to show it.

Kat is naturally talented at ballet but finds her hip hop classes much more interesting. At least they're relevant to what's going on in the world. Kat thinks ballet is ridiculous and should be relegated to a museum.

Kat's energy is infectious and her flair for mischief, legendary. She's one of those people who can convince you to do anything — and when you end up in the Principal's office she'll just grin and roll her eyes. Kat is the life of every party and a born storyteller. The perfect complement to Tara's wide-eyed innocence, Kat stops her friend from getting too earnest with a healthy dose of realism and a naughty sense of humour.

Kat can make you laugh more than anyone you know, but you'll also be exhausted trying to keep up. She has an insatiable appetite for fun but is easily bored and gets herself in trouble when she takes things too far.

Some people are afraid of failure but Kat is afraid of success. She loves her mother but she's obsessed with her career and doesn't want to end up like her. Kat and her stepbrother, Ethan, have gotten used to taking care of themselves. Their parents are proud that the kids are so independent. Kat wishes just once they could be like a normal family.

Kat is a very private person, despite how extroverted she seems. She makes friends easily but only keeps a few close. Unlike Tara who wears her heart on her sleeve, Kat is much more difficult to read and keeps a lot bottled inside. No one would ever guess how insecure she often feels.



DANCE ACADEMY

Sammy Lieberman

“This year I am going to be one of the guys. Really.”

Sammy Lieberman is the kind of guy who's every girl's best friend but finds the other boys at the Academy much more difficult to talk to. He's the third member of Kat and Tara's pas de trois and it's a role that suits him perfectly.

The eldest son in a conservative Jewish family, it's always been expected that Sammy will follow in his father's footsteps and go into medicine. Sammy broke his father's heart when he decided he wanted to be a dancer instead. After months of pleading he was allowed to attend the Academy on the following conditions:

1) He continues to get straight A's in all his academic subjects; and 2) He attends the Synagogue as per normal.

As a result, Sammy now has to juggle the pressures of his faith and his family against those of the Academy. All prove equally demanding.



Sammy is turning 16 this year but, although he tries, he's not the best dancer in the year. In fact he's so weak in certain areas that his teachers force him to take pointe classes to strengthen his ankles - which doesn't help his reputation with the other boys and he's particularly bad at pas de deux when he has to lift girls far taller than him. However, the teachers see potential and are certain that one day he'll grow into his body and this frog will become a prince.

But that day's still a long way off and when Sammy arrives at the Academy he's considered a total outcast until Kat rescues him and makes him cool. Well, as cool as Sammy *can* be in his own unique way. His defence against the world is his self-deprecating sense of humour. He's always prepared to laugh at himself before anyone gets in first. When Christian becomes his roommate Sammy slowly makes a new friend. Christian and Sammy are total opposites - maybe that's what makes it work.

While Sammy may wish to be more like the other guys, and less of an oddball, he always stays true to himself. He has a strong moral code and tries to help people whenever he can. In lots of ways, Sammy is young for his age, but he's also surprisingly mature in his outlook on life and the person he is.

DANCE ACADEMY

Abigail Armstrong

“I’m not a bitch. I’m ambitious. There’s a difference.”

Abigail has been dancing since birth and is the best student in the class. It’s not a title she’s going to give up easily.

Startlingly beautiful, people are drawn to Abigail with a kind of morbid fascination and she learnt long ago how to use her charisma to manipulate others. When Abigail wants something she can make you feel as if you’re the whole world... and when she’s got what she wanted she can end the privilege just as quickly.

All her life Abigail has worked hard to prove she is something special. Abigail’s deepest, darkest fear is that she isn’t.



This year Abigail’s body is changing and she regards it as a terrible betrayal. Suddenly, it’s no longer so easy to be the thinnest or the best and Abigail pushes herself to work harder than anyone, with a determination that even her enemies have to respect. She is a naturally gifted dancer but knows she’s not perfect. The teachers often talk about a coldness to her dancing that Abigail can’t fix, however hard she tries.

As we get to know Abigail we find more and more humour in her ruthlessness. It’s astonishing how extreme she can sometimes be. Kat delights in pressing her buttons and over time Tara learns that it’s easier to laugh at Abigail than let her make you cry.

Abigail isn’t a horrible person but she believes ballet is everything and made the decision long ago that to reach her dream she will do whatever it takes, even if means stepping over every friend she’s got in the process. Abigail justifies this behaviour by saying lots of people at the Academy are competitive; she’s just upfront about it. Besides, on the rare occasion she tries to let other people in, it never works out the way she planned — she’s just not very good with people. And so Abigail figures since everyone already thinks she’s a bitch, she may as well be the biggest bitch she can be.

This attitude works well for a while but when life starts to slip out of Abigail’s control, she falls into bad habits. As her eating disorder becomes serious, will she be able to maintain the kind of strength she needs to succeed? And will she destroy everything she’s worked for rather than work on the underlying issues that lay at the heart of her problem? This year, bit by bit, Abigail learns the value of friendship.

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Christian Reed

“The second this turns into a group hug I’m leaving.”

Christian Reed is the kind of boy most teenage girl’s dream of – gorgeous, mysterious and angry with the world.

He grew up in the urban beachside suburb of Maroubra, with a devoted mother, an absent father and a much older brother whom he idolised. Even as a little boy he was extremely coordinated and his mum made an effort to teach him dancing (she had studied ballet when she was young). This athleticism translates into everything Christian does. Christian likes to push his body to the max; the greater the risk, the more it interests him.

Christian’s childhood was poor and tough and he was often called upon to be the adult - especially when his mother was diagnosed with cancer. With his father long gone and his brother working in the mines, it became Christian’s responsibility to look after her and it’s not something he’ll ever get over. Before his mother died she made him promise that he’d audition for the National Academy of Dance. Christian kept his promise but never said he’d go if he got in. Instead, he ignores his letter of acceptance and continues to hang out with his fellow adrenaline-seeking mates.



One night they take things too far and Christian ends up in serious trouble with the police. On advice from his Legal Aid lawyer and with nowhere else to go, Christian arrives at the Academy... although that doesn’t mean he’s going to take dancing seriously and there’s no way he’s going to wear tights. He has to stay at school and keep his nose clean as he waits for the hearing, but for now he’s safe.

In his first few weeks, Christian decides he’s better off doing the loner thing. You know what they say about ‘ballet boys’ – there’s no way he’d have anything in common with them. The teachers are the biggest joke of all, with their ridiculous rules and sense of self-importance and Christian goes out of his way to ruffle their feathers. Until you get to know Christian it’s impossible to work out whether he’s being genuine or mildly sarcastic, though it’s usually the latter. He does everything with a half-smile that often disguises what’s simmering below the surface.

None of the students know much about Christian’s past or why he gets special treatment from Mr. Kennedy. For a long time Christian remains a bit of a mystery. What isn’t in question is his dancing ability. Christian has a power in his dancing that is rarely seen. But it all comes too easily and he’s never really sure that dancing is what he wants.

Tara and Christian are partners in pas de deux class and dance as if they were made for each other. But while some of the girls swoon over Christian’s bad boy image, Tara finds him unbearable. Down-to-earth one moment, moody and aloof the next, Christian is the most infuriating boy she knows! Whenever they’re not dancing, they’re trading insults.

As the year progresses Christian lets down his defences, revealing a complicated person underneath. It’s a turbulent journey but slowly he begins to trust people again. And, gradually, Christian and Tara discover that love and hate can be two sides of the same coin.

DANCE ACADEMY

Ethan Karamakov

“So when you’re catching footballs, I’m lifting hot girls in leotards? Nice.”

Life seems pretty good for Ethan Karamakov who’s turning 18 this year and is in his third year at the Academy.

He’s cute, he’s talented, he’s an all-round nice guy – the Golden Boy of the Academy. He’s someone that teachers want in their class and parents want their kids to be friends with. He’s popular with the guys at school and even more popular with the girls. He’s Tara’s dream boy.

Early in the year Ethan is asked to be Christian’s mentor and what starts as an antagonistic, forced situation grows into true friendship as these guys discover they have more in common than they at first thought.



Ethan is Kat’s older brother and feels some of the same pressure in living up to their famous parents. However, unlike Kat who thinks the ballet world is ridiculous, Ethan wants to become a choreographer and push the boundaries of dance. Fusing modern styles like hip hop with classical, he’s determined to carve his own way and not follow in his father’s footsteps. Most of the time, he’s confident he’ll succeed.

This confidence is confirmed when he hears a rumour that he will be invited early to join the Company. When this finally happens it comes at a time when Ethan is more than ready to leave the school behind and step up into the adult world.

Ethan dates lots of girls at the Academy and at first Tara is just one in a string of many. He doesn’t take it too seriously. That changes when he finds himself being affected by her innocence and Tara actually gets under his skin.

When Ethan discovers that Tara has fallen for his best mate, he is badly thrown. On the surface he maintains his golden boy image, but once betrayed will Ethan revert to his self-serving ways? Or has finding his place in the Academy and making real friends for the first time, changed him forever?

DANCE ACADEMY

SHORT EPISODE SYNOPSES

EPISODE ONE “LEARNING TO FLY” (PT 1)

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

Country-girl Tara Webster travels to Sydney to audition for the prestigious National Academy of Dance. It's a tumultuous week as she realises her dream of becoming a dancer is going to be a lot more difficult, and humiliating, than she ever anticipated.

EPISODE TWO “WEEK ZERO”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

Tara arrives at the Academy excited about the year ahead but soon discovers that she is the worst dancer in the class. As Tara struggles to fit in, she learns the hard way to respect her teachers, who her true friends are, and to watch her back around her roommate Abigail.

EPISODE THREE “BEHIND BARRES”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Sam Carroll

When Tara's crush on Ethan threatens to derail her friendship with Kat, Sammy gets her to write a pros and cons list to clear her head. As the roommate war escalates, Abigail wins a decisive victory - emailing Tara's list to the whole school. Christian finds himself in the custody of the police and, with nowhere else to go, has to accept his place at the Academy.

EPISODE FOUR “MINEFIELD”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by David Ogilvy

The first years are given trust exercises to help forge connections with their pas de deux partners. Tara is frustrated when Christian refuses to participate, however they connect unexpectedly when Tara follows him to the beach and Christian rescues her from a dangerous situation. Meanwhile Kat feels betrayed by Tara's secret crush on Ethan and Sammy finds himself tied to Abigail for 24 hours.

EPISODE FIVE “REAL MEN DON'T DANCE”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Michael Miller

Sammy is forced to choose between dance and his father when compulsory Saturday ballet classes clash with his Synagogue services. Christian struggles to accept the rules of the Academy.

EPISODE SIX “PERFECTION”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

The National Ballet comes to town and Tara is thrilled to learn that Kat's mother is Natasha Willis, the Company's Principal dancer and her childhood idol. Sammy's girlfriend, Mia, also arrives forcing Sammy to evaluate his growing feelings for Abigail.

EPISODE SEVEN “CRUSH TEST DUMMIES”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Deborah Parsons

Christian reluctantly agrees to dance in Ethan's showcase but can't stand the derivative choreography. In order to show this ballet boy some real hip-hop, Christian takes Ethan home to Maroubra. Sammy admits to having feelings for someone at the Academy and while Tara and Kat try to figure out her identity, Tara gives Kat a lesson on what it means to have a crush.

EPISODE EIGHT “GROWING PAINS”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan WRITTEN by Sarah Lambert

Abigail is devastated that her body seems to be developing and defies Miss Raine by wearing a loose top to class. Sammy is forced to buy a dance belt, with Christian as his unlikely shopping buddy. Meanwhile, in an attempt prove to Ethan that she's not just a little kid, Tara pretends to be dating Damien Lang, an older dancer in the Company.

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EPISODE NINE “HEARTBEAT”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Matt Ford

Mocking her friends' obsession with teen popstar, Myles Kelly, Kat creates a video of herself dancing to one of his songs and then posts it on the internet. She is surprised when the record company invites her to dance in Myles's next video clip... and stunned when sparks fly between herself and the heart-throb.

EPISODE TEN “THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by David Hannam

Christian's best mate Aaron comes to stay and reveals the truth about the robbery they committed. Later, Aaron uses Christian as an alibi forcing Christian to lie to the police, and to question whether old friends are necessarily good friends. Meanwhile, Abigail's control issues are spiralling out-of-control and she is caught shoplifting.

EPISODE ELEVEN “ONE PERFECT DAY”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Max Dann & Greg Waters

Tara is excited when Ethan asks her to star in his choreography assessment piece, but Ethan only has eyes for his mentor, Dana. Abigail's sister, Paige, stays for the weekend and when the gang goes on a trip to an amusement park, long-held tensions between the girls reveal that all is not okay with Abigail.

EPISODE TWELVE “PRESSURE”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

Pressure is building at the Academy as the students prepare for exams. Tara tries to ignore her recent “almost-pash” with Ethan in an attempt to stay focused. With her sights set on the first year scholarship, Abigail pushes herself too far and severely restricts her eating.

EPISODE THIRTEEN “FAMILY”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

It's Open Week at the Academy and Tara discovers she is embarrassed by her unsophisticated parents, especially around her new boyfriend Ethan. Her mum later reveals that the farm is in serious financial trouble and her expensive tuition fees aren't helping. Meanwhile, Kat's mother reneges on her promised family holiday and Sammy's father also disappoints by failing to show up to watch him dance. Abigail is stuck at home in bed and finds a friend in Sammy.

EPISODE FOURTEEN “TURNING POINTES”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore **WRITTEN** by Greg Waters

Tara returns from the holidays excited to have been awarded the first year scholarship. However, this soon turns to disappointment when Kat leaves her standing alone outside a warehouse party the night before their first ballet class. Abigail is trying to be a perfect patient in her therapy sessions but has to ask for help in order to start tackling the real issues behind her eating disorder.

EPISODE FIFTEEN “MY LIFE EN POINTE”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Sam Carroll

Petra Hoffman arrives at the Academy on exchange from the Berlin Ballet School. Homesick, she adopts a lost dog and attempts to conceal him in the Boarding House. Kat has been ditching class to spend time with her new boyfriend and her punishment is to teach ballet to a class of underprivileged kids. Tara ends up kissing Christian behind Ethan's back, leaving her feeling guilty and confused.

EPISODE SIXTEEN “FREE FALLING”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

Kat is upset when her parent's ignore her 16th birthday and throws herself a huge party at their harbour front home as revenge. However chaos soon reigns when Tara spies Kat kissing Christian and realizes she can't ignore her own feelings, Petra accidentally gets drunk, the photo of Tara and Christian together is revealed, and the police are called to end the out-of-control party!

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EPISODE SEVENTEEN “A MIDSUMMER’S NIGHT’S DREAM”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

It is school camp time and Tara is ostracised by her friends and further humiliated when photos of her and Christian kissing keep appearing everywhere. Tensions culminate in a fight between Kat and Tara, and both girls learn the hard way that friendship is more important than boys.

EPISODE EIGHTEEN “BETTY BUNHEADS”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Alicia Walsh

Petra has decided to stay in Australia and enjoy life as an ordinary teenager, however when the Berlin Ballet offers her a contract she has a difficult choice to make. When Scout auditions for the Junior School summer programme, Kat is able to make amends for disappointing the younger girl. Meanwhile Sammy and Abigail have started meeting in secret and Abigail has no intention of making it public knowledge - they're just kissing, it's not a relationship.

EPISODE NINETEEN “FAIREST & BEST”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore **WRITTEN** by David Hannam

The Institute of Sport's Australian Rules Forward Squad has been sent to the Academy for some specialised training and the challenge is soon on, between the dancers and the footballers, to prove which is the toughest sport. Miss Raine has chosen Tara and Abigail to do daily private classes and Tara finally learns why Abigail hates her so much.

EPISODE TWENTY “BALLET FEVER”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore **WRITTEN** by Ellie Beaumont

When the Board decides to cut hip hop and jazz from the curriculum Kat goes on the warpath, blaming her mother for this change. Tara and Christian find themselves together at the beach and their spark is rekindled, so much so that they lose track of time and are running late for the Patron's Showcase performance when Tara trips and badly injures herself.

EPISODE TWENTY ONE “FOMO: FEAR OF MISSING OUT”

DIRECTED by Ben Chessell **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

It's a month since Tara's injury and her plaster is due to come off but Tara seems much more focused on her new boyfriend, Christian, and organising the school formal. Sammy and Abigail decide take their relationship to the next level and Ethan is offered an early contract with the Company.

EPISODE TWENTY TWO “FLIGHT OR FIGHT RESPONSE”

DIRECTED by Ben Chessell **WRITTEN** by Liz Doran

Christian's sentencing hearing has been set and, believing that he's headed for juvenile detention, Christian decides to stop playing by other people's rules and goes back to his old neighbourhood. Tara has been working hard in rehab, with Ethan as her coach, but is too scared to dance again. Sammy is so focused on trying to save Christian that he's been ignoring Abigail and she has to accept that their relationship is over.

EPISODE TWENTY THREE “BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss & Greg Waters

Christian is ready for his court date but everything unravels when old loyalties cause him to change his story. Kat is shocked to learn her brother is moving overseas and in an attempt to get him to stay, tries to reignite the flame between Ethan and Tara.

EPISODE TWENTY FOUR “HEATWAVE”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by David Hannam

Sammy and Christian have made a pact of brotherhood - from now on they are an island of man - but Kat wonders whether Sammy might have a man crush on his new best friend. Meanwhile, auditions for The Nutcracker are coming up and neither Kat nor Ethan are thrilled to discover their father is directing the ballet. Abigail learns her parents are separating and puts everything she has into securing a solo role.

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EPISODE TWENTY FIVE “THE DEEP END”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Greg Waters

Rehearsals for The Nutcracker are underway. Tara is playing the role of Clara and quickly discovers that being the star is not all its cracked up to be as Abigail’s claws re-emerge. Sammy is forced to admit that his feelings for Christian have moved beyond that of just friendship and Myles Kelly returns to rescue Kat from the costume dungeon where she has been exiled since walking out of her audition.

EPISODE TWENTY SIX “LEARNING TO FLY PT 2”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

The end of year performance of the Nutcracker at the Opera House has finally arrived and Tara continues to perform her role so badly that it seems Abigail will be re-cast in her place. Does Tara have what it takes to put everything she has learnt this year into practice and find the courage to stand centre stage?

DANCE ACADEMY

EXTENDED EPISODE SYNOPSSES

EPISODE ONE “LEARNING TO FLY” (PT 1)

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

15-year-old Tara Webster travels to Sydney to audition for the top ballet school in the country, the National Academy of Dance. Tara is confident that all her dreams are about to come true. What Tara doesn't realise is that she's almost impossibly behind in her training... and that there's more to surviving life at the Academy than just dancing. Within a week Tara has found an unlikely ally in Kat, a sophisticated enemy in Abigail, been spotted undressed in the boys' toilets by bad boy Christian and developed a crush on the school's golden boy, Ethan. Suddenly her world is a much bigger, scarier place.

EPISODE TWO “WEEK ZERO”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

Tara leaves her home in the country and arrives at the Academy filled with excitement about the year ahead, but she's crushed to learn that she is at the bottom of all her classes and not allowed to dance en pointe until her technique improves. Fortunately she's not alone: Sammy's at the bottom as well except he is forced to wear pointe shoes to strengthen his ankles. Strangely, Abigail has requested Tara as a roommate - what Tara doesn't know is that it's to keep a competitive eye on her rather than a gesture of friendship. However, Tara still manages to have fun during orientation week. She jumps from a high balcony into Sydney Harbour with Kat late at night as an initiation ritual, and Ethan even remembers her name! Tara finally sees that Abigail has never been a friend and forms a tight trio with Kat and Sammy. Together, they might just make it through the first week, and the rest of the year at Dance Academy!

EPISODE THREE “BEHIND BARRES”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Sam Carroll

It is roommate wartime at the Academy: Tara wants to move in with Kat but Abigail refuses to sign the room swap form. Determined to make Abigail change her mind, Kat sets about playing practical jokes on her until she relents. Meanwhile, Tara's crush on Ethan is growing more intense every day but she discovers Kat won't tolerate friends dating her brother. Sammy is concerned that Tara's crush will ruin their friendship group and tries to help her realise this by writing a pros and cons list about Ethan... but all it does is make Tara more convinced of her feelings for him. Ethan isn't the only boy complicating Tara's life. Christian, who Tara clashed with during auditions, has arrived at the Academy and seems determined to antagonise her. However, Christian is preoccupied with a secret of his own - he was arrested by the police after committing a robbery, and is forced to stay at the Academy as part of his bail conditions.

EPISODE FOUR “MINEFIELD”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by David Ogilvy

The students at the Academy are given trust exercises designed to help them connect with their pas de deux partners. Tara isn't thrilled to learn that Christian is her new partner and is further annoyed when he refuses to participate in the exercise. They've been instructed to ask each another twenty questions and when Christian decides to head to the beach for the day, Tara follows him, along with an unhappy Kat and her blindfolded partner, Sean. Abigail's patience is tested when she's instructed to stay tied by a cord to Sammy for twenty-four hours. Sammy, however, uses the exercise as an opportunity to try to see beneath Abigail's Ice Princess exterior. Meanwhile, Tara finds an unexpected silver lining to her day when Ethan shows up at the beach with some friends. She abandons Kat to flirt with Ethan but ends up being left behind herself and stumbles into trouble with some local thugs. Christian redeems himself by rescuing Tara and despite the conflicts of the day they find a moment of connection on the long walk home.

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EPISODE FIVE “REAL MEN DON’T DANCE”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker **WRITTEN** by Michael Miller

Sammy’s father does not want his son to be a dancer but agreed to let him attend the Academy on the condition that it would not interfere with his academic studies or with proper religious observance. However, with Saturday Synagogue attendance and Saturday ballet class both compulsory, Sammy has been lying to his family and the school... and he’s about to be found out! Christian’s position at the Academy is also questioned when Mr. Kennedy challenges him to make a long-term commitment to a career as a dancer - he has the talent, but he has to do something with it and that means listening to his teachers and letting someone in. Meanwhile, Tara is determined to push Ethan out of her mind to focus on ballet, but this is not as easy as she’d imagined.

EPISODE SIX “PERFECTION”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

Tara is stunned to learn that Kat’s mother is Natasha Willis, a world acclaimed ballerina and Tara’s greatest idol. However, Kat is unimpressed with Tara’s adoration and becomes even more annoyed when Tara dyes her hair black to match Natasha’s. Tara ignores her friend’s feelings and takes Natasha up on her offer to watch a performance backstage. What she sees shocks Tara into realising that perhaps Natasha isn’t idol material after all. Meanwhile, Sammy’s perfect girlfriend Mia has unexpectedly returned from an overseas exchange and he’s torn between his loyalty to Mia and his new-found and growing attraction to Abigail. Unable to help himself, Sammy reneges on a date with Mia to take Abigail to Swan Lake, and when Mia discovers Sammy lied to her they’re forced to admit their relationship is over.

EPISODE SEVEN “CRUSH TEST DUMMIES”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker **WRITTEN** by Deborah Parsons

Ethan needs a dancer for his hip-hop choreography showcase and calls Christian on the favour he owes him. Christian agrees but refuses to dance Ethan’s choreography, deeming it wannabe American gangster. He takes Ethan back to his old neighbourhood, the housing commission at Maroubra, to show him some real Australian street hip-hop. Ethan is inspired by what he sees but his flirting with Kaylah, a street hip-hop dancer, puts him off side with some of the Maroubra locals and when Kaylah’s street-smart cousin Tweak tries to fight him, Ethan finds himself in deeper trouble than he can handle on his own. Fortunately he finds unexpected support from Christian, who arrives just in time to help Ethan defend himself. Meanwhile, Tara’s pathetic attempts to make Ethan notice her and Sammy’s own burgeoning feelings for a “mystery girl” cause Kat to analyse the nature of crushes. Tara is the self-proclaimed expert on this subject and is happy to educate Kat in every aspect of the mysterious art form, however the girls can’t believe it when they discover it is Abigail who Sammy has a crush on.

EPISODE EIGHT “GROWING PAINS”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Sarah Lambert

Growing up is never easy, especially at an elite dance school where your body, its changes and your private life are under constant scrutiny. Tara is sick of being the youngest and Ethan seeing her as just a little kid. Enter Damien Lang, a soloist in the Company who comes from a town close to hers. They soon develop an easy rapport and when Tara is seen talking to him in the corridors, a rumour spreads that they are dating. Tara is overjoyed by this rumour and how it will increase her popularity, but when it becomes a scandal that jeopardises Damien’s career, Tara is forced to admit the humiliating truth. Tara is not the only student dealing with embarrassing situations in public; Abigail is unwilling to accept the changes in her developing body and tries to cover them by diverting from the strict uniform code. Sammy also clashes with the Academy regarding proper dance apparel when he is forced to purchase and wear a male dance belt.

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EPISODE NINE “HEARTBEAT”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Matt Ford

Mocking her friends' obsession with teen popstar Myles Kelly, Kat creates a video of herself dancing to one of his songs and then posts it on the internet. The video proves popular with viewers and as a result the music company invites her to dance in Myles's next video clip. During the shoot Kat criticises Myles's costumes and choreography so he challenges her to help him create new choreography and a different style for the clip. Myles is so impressed with Kat's efforts that he invites her to be a permanent dancer on his tour. Although a romance is blossoming between them, Kat realises she can't go - it's time she stops following other people around and works out what she wants to do herself. Meanwhile, Kat is not the only one being challenged to prove her talents. Ethan views Christian as a friendly rival and the two boys have begun to compete with each other. Their competitiveness culminates with them dancing against one another to win the sole place in choreographer Dana Strong's holiday workshop. Christian proves to be the stronger dancer, however knowing Ethan wants this opportunity more than he does, Christian secretly rejects Dana's offer and allows Ethan to claim the win.

EPISODE TEN “THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by David Hannam

Christian's past catches up with him when his best mate Aaron comes to stay at the Boarding House and Aaron reveals to Tara, Kat and Sammy the real reason Christian is at the Academy. As the gang begin to think that they may not know their friend as well as they thought they did, Kat's camera goes missing and all blame turns to Aaron. He claims innocence but later uses Christian as an alibi for a much more serious crime, forcing Christian to lie to the police, and jeopardise his position at the Academy. During this, Abigail has continued to restrict her eating and this disorder is now manifesting in other destructive behaviours. She has begun to shoplift and when she's caught with Tara they both land in a lot of trouble. While Tara struggles to understand Abigail's control issues, Christian is left questioning his own lifelong friendship with Aaron and wondering whether old friends are necessarily good friends.

EPISODE ELEVEN “ONE PERFECT DAY”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Max Dann & Greg Waters

Tara is elated when Ethan asks her to dance in his choreographic assessment piece. Is he finally beginning to see her as a romantic potential? But when she arrives at the studio to find Ethan engrossed in conversation with his mentor - the talented, gorgeous and much older Dana Strong - it's obvious who Ethan has his sights on. Eager to impress Dana with his talents as a choreographer, Ethan pushes Tara mercilessly to dance better. When Ethan, mistaking cockiness for confidence, pushes his flirtations too far, Dana leaves him with instructions to find a mentor who is willing to put up with his ego. While Tara struggles to impress Ethan with her dancing, Kat, Sammy, Abigail and her younger sister Paige head to Luna Park for the day. Abigail struggles to connect with Paige who would prefer to be in the company of Kat and Sammy. The tension between the siblings results in a confrontation at Circular Quay, and Paige runs away from Abigail leaving her distressed and concerned for Paige's safety. Tara eventually catches Ethan's attentions by pouring all her frustrations into dancing his piece. Ethan is so amazed at her performance that he kisses her, but it's not at all how Tara had imagined their first kiss would be.

EPISODE TWELVE “PRESSURE”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

Pressure is building at the Academy as the students prepare for exams week. Tara tries to ignore her recent “almost-pash” with Ethan so she can focus on her exams; however it's not as easy as she'd hoped. When Ethan attempts to kiss her again, Tara makes a quick exit. Remembering how awkward their first kiss was, she doesn't want to ruin her chances with a terrible second kiss as well and so Tara recruits Kat and Sammy for advice and help. Meanwhile, the other students are under a different kind of pressure. Abigail is determined to score the first year scholarship and stops eating altogether. As her partner in pas de deux, Sammy notices that there's something wrong but Abigail makes him promise not to say anything - she'll rest and eat after the exams. However, exhausted and under-nourished, Abigail collapses in the final exam and Sammy realises he's made a terrible mistake.

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EPISODE THIRTEEN “FAMILY”

DIRECTED by Jeffrey Walker WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

It's Open Week at the Academy, when parents watch their children in a series of demonstration classes. Tara is thrilled to see her mum and dad again but when they arrive she is embarrassed that they're not as sophisticated as everyone else's parents. Later, Tara is shocked when her mum tells her the farm is in serious financial trouble. Tara realizes that family is the most important thing and makes a very difficult and adult decision about her future. However, Tara is given a second chance when Miss Raine announces she's won the first year scholarship, enabling her to continue at the Academy. Meanwhile, Kat feels betrayed that Natasha has reneged on a family holiday she'd promised in order to dance in yet another international ballet. Kat seeks revenge by 'borrowing' Natasha's credit card for an expensive shopping spree. Sammy also suffers disappointment when his father fails to attend any classes, and he is left wondering if his father will ever accept that he wants to be a dancer. Sammy is also concerned about Abigail who is still recovering at home, and takes matters into his own hands when her mother prevents him from visiting her. Christian, who has no family to visit him, unexpectedly forms an easy connection with Tara's dad, Neil. Ethan however has trouble connecting with Neil who views Ethan as a spoilt rich city kid and isn't thrilled that Ethan is dating his daughter.

EPISODE FOURTEEN “TURNING POINTES”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore WRITTEN by Greg Waters

Tara returns from the school holidays on top of the world - she has great friends, a gorgeous boyfriend, the first year scholarship and is finally allowed to dance en pointe. Kat introduces Tara to her new boyfriend Lucas, a “diplobrat” she met while on holiday with her mother in Europe. Tara immediately dislikes him but doesn't reveal her aversion to Kat, who convinces Tara to go to a warehouse party in the city with them - despite it being the night before the first day of school; it will be the “defining night” of their friendship. However at the party Tara is stranded outside with no phone or wallet. Fortunately Christian arrives to help and together they make their way back to the boarding house... sharing an unexpected, totally off limits, romantic moment! Meanwhile, Abigail is struggling to convince her therapist to allow her to return to ballet classes after her collapse last semester. Sammy, who has been her constant companion throughout the holidays, tries to convince Abigail to help him out with the ballroom dance classes that he is taking for his grandmother and her friends.

EPISODE FIFTEEN “MY LIFE EN POINTE”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie WRITTEN by Sam Carroll

Tensions are flaring between Tara and Christian since their romantic moment beneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge and it's only made worse when Ethan asks them to help him with his showreel, forcing them to dance together. Their antagonism culminates in an argument on the banks of the harbour, where Tara surprises herself by kissing Christian. Shocked by her actions, she flees the scene, leaving Christian equally confused. However, Tara is not the only student getting herself into trouble... Kat is caught missing classes to attend a music festival with new boyfriend Lucas, and as punishment is forced to 'volunteer' at a local dance centre for underprivileged children. Expecting the worst, Kat is surprised when she forms an unlikely connection with a fiery young girl named Scout. Kat offers to take the class to the dress rehearsal of a television dance show, however when she later forgets about the excursion, the director of the centre warns Kat that he can't expose the children to someone who is going to disappoint them. Life at the Academy is further complicated by the arrival of Petra Hoffman, the new German exchange student, who becomes Kat's new roommate. Petra, feeling lonely in a new country, befriends a lost dog and hides him in the Boarding House. Kat and Tara help Petra find the dog's owners, cementing a friendship with her in the process.

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EPISODE SIXTEEN “FREE FALLING”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

Hurt when her parent's ignore her 16th birthday, Kat throws a huge party at their Harbour-front home. The house quickly fills with people and events spiral out of control. Kat gets drunk and Lucas tries to take advantage of her, but fortunately Christian is around to rescue her in time. Kat then pours her heart out to Christian and ends up kissing him. Petra drinks jelly shots unaware that they contain alcohol and Sammy and Abigail are forced to look after her. Meanwhile, Tara can't seem to get Christian out of her head and she's having trouble focusing on ballet and Ethan. Confused about her feelings, Tara arrives at the party determined to end her relationship with Ethan, however when she sees Christian kissing Kat, Tara flees the party drawing attention to her dilemma. Abigail takes full advantage of the situation and sends a damning photo of Christian and Tara to Kat's phone. The situation goes from bad to worse when Christian ends up in a street fight with Lucas and the police are called to shut the party down. At the Academy the next day all the students are in trouble for attending the party and placed on detention. Kat is on probation until further notice.

EPISODE SEVENTEEN “A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT'S DREAM”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

It is school camp time and everyone is dreading the trip away, especially Tara who is on the outer. Kat still isn't talking to her former best friend and Tara is further humiliated when photos of her kissing Christian keep appearing everywhere. Tara believes Kat is the culprit and confronts her about it. Kat denies the accusation and their argument results in a physical mud fight during a performance in the bush. Kat and Tara are sent to the camp showers where Petra, tired of their childish bickering, steals their clothes in an attempt to force them to work it out. Meanwhile, Abigail is banned from dance class until she completes her English essay, and Sammy has been assigned as her tutor. When he discovers that Abigail has been cheating, he confronts her about it but doesn't initially realise it's because Abigail believes she is stupid. Sammy works hard to convince Abigail that she has brains, she's not just a dancing body, and is rewarded for his efforts with a kiss from the girl of his dreams!

EPISODE EIGHTEEN “BETTY BUNHEADS”

DIRECTED by Catriona McKenzie **WRITTEN** by Alicia Walsh

Petra is thrilled when Mr Kennedy invites her to stay in Sydney at the Academy, however when the Berlin Ballet Company offers her a contract she has a difficult choice to make - her lifelong dream or the chance to spend the next few years as a student and a teenager? It's good news to everyone when Petra decides to stay, except for Abigail who sees her as a serious threat. Abigail engineers it so that Petra and Tara miss their rostered time to help with the auditions for the Junior School's Summer Program which lands them in hot water with Miss Raine. Thinking they have a free afternoon, Petra and Tara, along with and Sammy, celebrate by going out for a picnic in the Botanical Gardens. Petra has a serious crush on Sammy and now that she is staying in Australia she'd like something to happen between them. Meanwhile, Kat learns that Scout is auditioning for the junior school but her offers to help are rebuffed because she is still not forgiven for disappointing Scout last time. However, when Scout misses out on a place, Kat enlists Christian's help to get her another audition. At the same time Sammy and Abigail have begun secretly kissing, but while Sammy wants to make their relationship public, Abigail insists it remains behind closed doors. In the end Petra decides to go home to Germany, to her family and to live her dream but she will remember the friends she made at Dance Academy forever.

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EPISODE NINETEEN “FAIREST & BEST”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore WRITTEN by David Hannam

Junior footballers from the Institute of Sport have been sent to the National Academy for a week of specialised training in order to improve their elevation, coordination and flexibility. Tension between the footballers and male dancers soon erupts and the challenge is on to prove which is the toughest sport. The footballers must learn a routine and dance it with no mistakes, while the ballet boys must score once in a game of touch football. Meanwhile Sammy and Abigail continue their secret relationship, but Sammy insists on knowing where he stands. Abigail refuses to go public and proves to him that a kiss doesn't mean anything, by kissing one of the football players. Tara is caught up in her own competition; Miss Raine is pitting her against Abigail in nightly private classes, intending to use their rivalry to drive each other harder. Tara doesn't like the person she becomes when she uses Abigail's vulnerabilities to get ahead. By the end of the week, alliances have formed between the two groups of athletes and the dancers learn from the footballers how to work as a team.

EPISODE TWENTY “BALLET FEVER”

DIRECTED by Ian Gilmore WRITTEN by Ellie Beaumont

With a solo coming up in the Patron's Showcase, Tara is working harder than ever, for the first time completely focused on ballet. Kat diagnoses this as severe case of “Ballet Fever” and the afternoon before the performance orders her to get away from the Academy. On the ferry going to the beach, Tara finds herself next to Christian - the last person she wants to spend time with - however over the course of the sunny afternoon, they forget all the reasons they're not supposed to be together and fall in love. Back on earth, Sammy has only been given an understudy role in the classical section of the Showcase and he's desperate to show Miss Raine that he's better than that. Sammy is crushed when his girlfriend, Abigail, tells him he should just accept it. Meanwhile, Kat feels like she's stuck between lovesick Sammy and ballet fevered Tara, right now the only highlight in her life is the hip hop dance they are performing in the showcase. This is why she is livid when she discovers the Board has decided to cut this subject from the curriculum - her mother is on the Board and she blames her for this decision. Kat decides to take matters into her own hands by staging a surprise hip hop demonstration. It's not the result she intended and she learns something new about her mother. While Tara and Christian, having lost track of time, are running late for the performance Tara slips and badly injures her leg. Reality comes crashing down.

EPISODE TWENTY ONE “FOMO: Fear Of Missing Out”

DIRECTED by Ben Chessell WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss

It's a month since Tara's injury and her plaster is due to come off, but Tara seems much more focused on her new boyfriend, Christian, and planning the school formal than she is in attending her doctors' appointment. Sammy and Abigail decide to take their relationship to the next level the night of the formal. Abigail wants it to be special and Sammy goes all out to make this happen but when the time comes he realises it doesn't feel right and has to tell Abigail he can't go through with it. Meanwhile Damien Lang - a soloist in the Company, who has the exact same injury as Tara - is unable to dance again and a rumour spreads that the Company is contemplating a shuffle-up, taking a Third Year in early. Ethan gets the word that the early contract will go to him. At his medical examination, Ethan discovers that Tara has missed her doctor's appointment and he is the person who she confides in that she likes being injured, she likes not dancing. Ethan convinces her that she wouldn't feel this way if it was forever and Tara gets her plaster off. However, before the formal Miss Raine tells her that she must choose once and for all; does she want to be a dancer or does she want to be an ordinary teenager? Deep in Tara's heart she knows that dancing comes first and this means breaking up with Christian to concentrate on her rehab. When they fight over her recent closeness with Ethan, and the fact she confided in him and not Christian, Tara lets her true love walk away leaving her alone on the dance-floor of the dream formal she has created.

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EPISODE TWENTY TWO “FLIGHT OR FIGHT RESPONSE”

DIRECTED by Ben Chessell

WRITTEN by Liz Doran

The date for Christian’s sentencing hearing has been set but his defence strategy relies on his best mate, and co-accused, Aaron to admit that he was the one who brought the knife to the robbery. However, Aaron has vanished and as Christian’s calls to him go unanswered, he loses hope that he’ll avoid juvenile detention. Christian decides to stop playing by other people’s rules and spend the rest of the time he has left doing all the things he’s always wanted. It takes Sammy’s loyal friendship to stop Christian from throwing away everything he’s worked for and go back to the Academy. During this, Tara has been working hard in rehab and the time has come for her to go back to dancing but she’s scared she’s not ready and will get injured again. Ethan has been her coach, using the time he spends with Tara to avoid signing his Company contract, because he’s no longer sure it’s what he wants. Both realise they need to face their fears in order to reach their dreams. Abigail also has to be brave and accept that there are problems in her relationship with Sammy. It takes Kat’s illegal hip hop class and some advice from an old friend for Abigail to realise she has to end things with Sammy.

EPISODE TWENTY THREE “BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan

WRITTEN by Samantha Strauss & Greg Waters

The time has finally arrived for Christian to face his punishment for the robbery; luckily Sammy is there to help him prepare for court. But when Aaron returns, Christian’s conscience gets the better of him and he changes his story to protect his friend. Concerned by the path Christian is taking, Sammy enlists the help of Christian’s oldest friend Kaylah to try and convince him to change his mind. As Kaylah hugs Christian in support, Tara sees them and her jealousy rears its head. When she discovers that Christian has a court hearing and hasn’t confided in her about any of it she lets loose - how could he not tell her? Christian’s response is that she doesn’t know him and if she’s honest she doesn’t want to, and Tara is left with the decision of whether to go and support Christian in court. Meanwhile, Ethan has received interest from a company in Spain who are looking to take on young choreographers. Feeling abandoned yet again, Kat devises a plan to get Tara and Ethan back together so that he will stay in Sydney, but her plan backfires when both Tara and Ethan see through her machinations. It takes a conversation with Abigail for Kat to realise that people aren’t always abandoning her. At the end of the day, the entire gang goes to support Christian at which point Aaron’s own conscience is pricked and he tells Christian that he won’t let him lie for him.

EPISODE TWENTY FOUR “HEATWAVE”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan

WRITTEN by David Hannam

In the weeks since the court hearing, Sammy and Christian have been inseparable. In fact, they’ve made a pact of brotherhood - from now on, they will forget all about girls and be an island of man. Sammy is elated; he’s never had such a good guy friend. However, when Christian ditches Sammy to spend time with Tara, what Sammy feels is uncomfortably a lot like jealousy. Kat asks him whether he’s developed a man crush on his friend and, while Sammy scoffs at this, over time he has to wonder whether she’s right... and worse, whether it’s more than that? What if he likes Christian as more than just a friend? At the same time, auditions for the end of year production of The Nutcracker are upon them and Kat and Ethan’s father - the internationally acclaimed Sebastian Karamakov - is directing the ballet. Ethan tries to impress his father with his plans for choreography but is told he is over-reaching and invited to be Sebastian’s assistant instead. As auditions loom, Abigail’s plans are derailed when she has to look after her little sister Paige who reveals that their parents are separating. The news hits Abigail hard but she manages to bury the pain and focus entirely on her audition. Tara approaches her audition differently; she’s just happy to be able to dance again and does so without any expectations of what will follow. Kat drops a bombshell when she walks out of her audition, sending a clear signal to her father about how she feels about The Nutcracker. When the roles are announced Abigail is thrilled to discover she has a solo role, but she wouldn’t be so happy if she knew that Tara has been given the even bigger role of Clara.

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EPISODE TWENTY FIVE “THE DEEP END”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Greg Waters

Rehearsals for The Nutcracker are underway and Tara has been thrown into the deep end. Her excitement over performing the lead role of Clara soon turns to apprehension then devastation, as her rehearsals get progressively worse. Understudy Abigail is learning the choreography faster than Tara and she uses ridicule to undermine Tara's confidence. Sammy's confused feelings towards Christian distress him, so he unsuccessfully tries to avoid him. Christian misinterprets Sammy's avoidance as a rejection and confronts him and Sammy is forced to tell Christian how he feels. By refusing to dance in the production, Kat finds herself relegated to the costume department, where she finds an enticing distraction in Myles Kelly, who has returned from his world tour and wants to spend every spare second he can with her. Myles presents Kat with a life changing offer she's not sure how she can refuse.

EPISODE TWENTY SIX “LEARNING TO FLY PT 2”

DIRECTED by Cherie Nowlan **WRITTEN** by Samantha Strauss

The end of year production has arrived and on-stage at the Opera House, Tara continues to perform her Act 2 solo so badly that the director, Sebastian Karamakov, tells her he is seriously considering replacing her with Abigail. While getting her Act 2 costume fitted, Tara learns that many famous ballerinas before her also wore the same nightgown. This knowledge gives her confidence and Tara begins to perform her solo perfectly, believing she's only able to dance well when she's wearing the nightgown. Sammy also faces adversity when he learns his parents are refusing to pay for his tuition next year, regardless of his good marks. He begs his father to come to the performance, believing that if he saw him dance he'd change his mind. Meanwhile, Kat has told Myles she is going to come away with him on the road trip of her dreams; however this decision is complicated when she confides in Christian about her predicament and he makes it clear that she's running away from everyone who loves her. Kat disregards this advice and still leaves with Myles, it's not until she gets a panicked phone call from Tara that she realises she's made a terrible mistake. Her friend needs her! Abigail has hidden Tara's sacred costume and when Tara discovers it isn't there she has major stage fright and can't go on. Eventually, overcome with guilt, Abigail helps convince Tara that the nightgown is only a costume, the magic lives inside her. As Tara steps out on-stage she stumbles but then performs the solo of her life. Surrounded by her Academy family, Tara dances more beautifully than we've ever seen her. Finally Tara Webster has her wish: she is flying.

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THE CAST



Xenia Goodwin as Tara Webster

Xenia started dancing at the age of nine with the Valerie Jenkins Academy of Ballet in Woollahra, NSW. In 2009 she was accepted into full-time training at the Tanya Pearson Classical Coaching Academy achieving Honours in her Cecchetti Ballet examinations.

Xenia also has experience in contemporary dance, national character, spanish and jazz.

In 2008 Xenia was selected to compete at the Sydney School Dance Competition and was also chosen to direct her Year 9 Drama group performance.

Xenia is multi-talented in drama and dance and is very excited to star in her first television show.

Alicia Banit as Kat Karamakov

Alicia has worked professionally as an actor since a very young age. She made her feature film debut as a young Miranda Otto in *The Dead Letter Office*. Her TV credits to date include *Halifax f.p.*, *Rove*, *In Melbourne Tonight* and a recurring role in *Neighbours*. As a teenager, she shot to public attention as one of Ja'mie's friends in Chris Lilley's hugely successful *Summer Heights High* for the ABC. Since then she has appeared in Disney's *As the Bell Rings* in the key role of Amber. In 2009 Alicia filmed Series 3 of this popular series. Alicia also played the recurring role of Leah in the critically acclaimed series *Tangle*.

Alicia has studied dance from the age of four and spent three years at the Victorian College of the Arts learning classical ballet, contemporary dance, tap, jazz, character dance, lyrical and acrobatics. She also studies



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Funk & Hip Hop and has relished putting all of her skill to use in the role of Kat.

Jordan Rodrigues as Christian Reed

Jordan began working professionally as an actor in 2003-2006 when he played the role of “Simba” in the *Lion King* for the Australian Tour at Capitol Theatre.

Jordan trained at Brent Street for over 10 years and has developed a great mix of ballet, jazz, hip hop, drama and singing.

In 2008 Jordan had a guest role in the first episode of *Blue Water High* and has since gone onto the role of Jai Fernandez in *Home and Away*, which saw him nominated for the “new talent” award at the 2009 Logies. The challenging role of Christian Reed has enabled Jordan to show off his multifaceted talents.



Dena Kaplan as Abigail Armstrong

Dena comes from a long line of performers and is one of three sisters all working professionally in the entertainment industry. At only 16 years of age, she joined the adult ensemble of *The Lion King* for their Melbourne and Sydney seasons. In Melbourne she worked alongside younger sister Ariel and then relocated to China for the Company's Shanghai season.

Dena began dancing at the age of three and was on stage before she turned four. She studied at the Jane Moore Academy of Ballet, and has been an associate of the Australian Ballet School. She was the winner of Australian Dance Idol in 2005 and in 2006 moved to New York to train at the world renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. She has also undertaken training at Broadway Dance Centre and The Space in Melbourne and vocal training with elite teachers. Dena has worked with the esteemed directors Michael Gondry and Nicholas Stoller and the celebrated choreographers Dana Jolly and Andrew Hallsworth.

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Other stage credits include *Don Quixote* for the Australian Ballet Company, Louise in *Carousel* for The Production Company and *Dance through Me* for Blackbird productions. TV credits include *Scooter: Secret Agent*, *City Homicide*, *X Factor*, *EliteXC* and the hugely successful *Flight of the Conchords*. While based in NYC Dena also took part in a high profile print campaign for Nike. Her

feature film debut came opposite Guy Pearce and Miranda Otto in the forthcoming *How to Change in 9 Weeks*.

Relocating back to Australia to join the Dance Academy team, Dena has loved playing the ice-queen role of Abigail Armstrong.

Tom Green as Sammy Lieberman

Tom began working professionally as an actor in 2007. He played the lead role of Zac in the telemovie *Emerald Falls* directed by Peter Andrikidis and made his stage debut as Phillip in *Lockie Leonard* for Merrigong Theatre Co.

In 2008 Tom brought to life the lead character of Kaden in, a 25 minute short film directed by Rene Hernandez. Tom was nominated for best Young Actor at the AFI awards for his work in *The Ground Beneath* and was awarded Best Actor at the St Kilda Film Festival for his performance. Tom also went on to win Best Actor in a short film at Ourense Film Festival in Spain for this role.

In 2008 Tom shot the comedy pilot, *Too Far* playing the lead role of Tom alongside Peter Rowsthorn and Corinne Grant, directors Matt Peek and Cam Ford. He also starred as Vafa in the AFTRS short film *Cross-over* directed by Amin Palangi.

Tom began 2009 as Simon Brent in Wesley Enoch's production of *The Nargun and The Stars* for the Sydney Festival and also finished work on *Home and Away* in the role of Dexter. As well as starring in a short film *Voyuernet*, Tom is scheduled for 2010 to work on a feature film *Thirst*.

For the past five years Tom has studied a variety of dance styles including ballet and hip hop and 2007 he received a distinction in the RAD Elementary ballet exam. Tom also has a 1st Dan Black Belt in Taekwondo.



DANCE ACADEMY

Tim Pocock as Ethan Karamakov

Born in South Africa, and raised in Ireland, Tim moved permanently to Australia at the age of seven. He soon developed an interest in singing and was accepted into the Australian Children's choir later that year. This led to a chance audition for a stage production of *The Sound of Music* in which he was eventually cast in the role of Kurt. Tim was offered a principal role in the Australian Opera Company's 1995 production of *The Magic Flute* and spent the next five years working with Opera Australia, performing over 100 times at the Australian Opera House in 12 productions including Neil Armfield's *Billy Budd*, Baz Luhrman's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Macbeth* and a reprisal of his role in *The Magic Flute* for its 1999 season.

With those, and other independent theatre credits to his name, Tim then turned his attention to acting on screen. When he finished school he attended the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney, taking part in their Screen Actor course, under the tutelage of Nicholas Bishop. Wanting to further his understanding of the Film and Television medium he also completed a course at the Sydney Film School in film production.



In 2009 Tim appeared in the feature film *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, in the role of Scott Summers, aka Cyclops and has loved joining the talented cast of the Dance Academy.

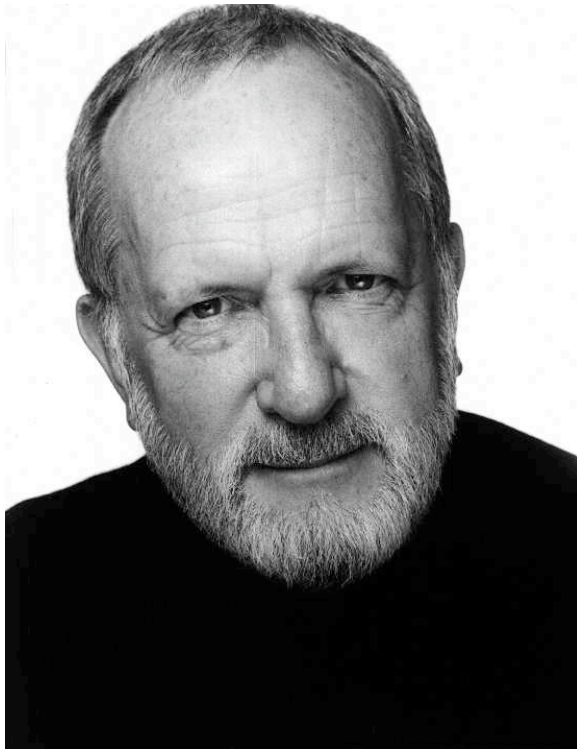
Tara Morice as Miss Raine

Tara is a graduate of NIDA and is a well known face on Australian screens having played roles in television series such as *GP*, *Grass Roots*, *Water Rats*, *Dogwoman*, *Answered By Fire* and as a presenter on *Playschool*.

Tara has performed for respected theatre companies such as Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Theatre Company, Company B, Ensemble Theatre and Griffin Theatre Company.

Her film roles include Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom*, *Hotel Sorrento*, *Metalskin*, *Hildegarde*, *Candy* and *Razzle Dazzle*.

DANCE ACADEMY



Robert Alexander as Mr Kennedy

Robert Alexander has graced the stage in many theatre productions. Most recently he performed in *Travesties* for Sydney Theatre Company.

Robert was a founding member of The Hunter Valley Theatre Company performing in productions *The Floating World*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Equus*, *Bedfellows*, *A Happy And Holy Occasion*, *Flexi Time* and *Educating Rita*.

As a member of the Nimrod Theatre Company he appeared in 20 productions including *Richard III*, *Inner Voices*, *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Treasure Island*, *The Sea*, *Tales From Vienna Woods*, *The Suicide*, *As You Like It* and *Variations*.

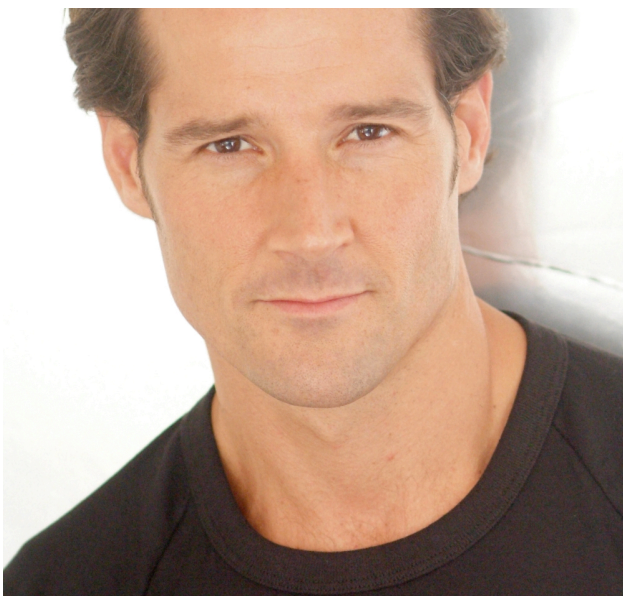
Some of his theatre credits include *Torch Song Trilogy*, for which he won the Victorian Green Room Award, *I Sent A Letter To My Love*, *The Last Yankee*, *The Threepenny Opera* and *Anatomy Titus Fall of Rome A Shakespeare*

Commentary for Queensland Theatre Company; *The Mortal Falcon*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Away*, *All My Sons*, *Three Sisters*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Six Degrees Of Separation*, *Dead White Males*, *What The Butler Saw*, *A Month In The Country* and *The Seagull* for State Theatre Company of South Australia; and *Accidental Death Of An Anarchist* for The Winter Theatre Company of Fremantle.

Robert has performed in all of Shakespeare's favourite plays with the Bell Shakespeare Company.

Robert's television credits include *King Lear*, *Spring and Fall*, *Learned Friends*, *Funeral Games*, *Minder Down Under*, *Heartland*, *Police Rescue*, *All Saints*, *Murder Call*, *Big Sky*, *The Whipping Boy*, *Home And Away*, *Neighbours* and *Richmond Hill*. Robert has appeared in the films *Empty Beach*, *Never Tell Me Never* and *Muriel's Wedding*.

Josef Brown as Patrick



In 2009 Josef played Johnny Castle in the original US production of *Dirty Dancing - The Classic Story on Stage*, which toured Chicago, Boston and Los Angeles. Josef originated this stage role in Australia and headed up the record breaking West End, London cast of the production in 2006.

Josef was a leading artist with Sydney Dance Company, Modern Dans Topluluguu (Ankara, Turkey), with Nomad Dance and a leading soloist with The Australian Ballet. He has performed numerous principal roles and has been nominated for a MO Award, Green Room Awards, been given Honourable Mentions in the Critics Choice Awards and was Best Performer in a Stage Musical in the Australian Dance Awards.

In 2004 Josef travelled to Palestine to film and was Associate Producer on, *Art, During Siege* a documentary that aired on ABC TV in 2005.

DANCE ACADEMY

THE CREW

PRODUCER/CO-CREATOR/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER - Joanna Werner

Award winning children's television producer Joanna Werner established Werner Film Productions in 2008 after many years producing live action children's drama series, which have screened around the world. *Dance Academy* is the first series to be produced by Werner Film Productions.

In 2007-08 Joanna produced *The Elephant Princess* shot in Melbourne for Jonathan M Shiff Productions, which won the AFI Award for Best Children's Television Series in 2009 and has been nominated for a Logie in 2010. This followed *H2O - Just Add Water* Series 2 which Joanna produced with Jonathan Shiff on the Gold Coast. The series won the 2009 Logie for Most Outstanding Children's Series, was nominated for an AFI Award and won the Nickelodeon Kid's Choice Award for Most Popular Children's series two years in a row. *H2O* has gone on to be a huge international success selling to over 130 territories worldwide including Nickelodeon in the US, and has been translated into over 15 languages.

Joanna also produced the 50 minute feature film *The Heartbreak Tour* for SBS and the AFC funded short film *Heartworm*. Other production credits include the first series of *H2O* which Joanna associate produced, along with *Wicked Science* series 1 & 2 and *Scooter: Secret Agent*.

Dance Academy finally gives Joanna the opportunity to make the most of 14 years of ballet and dance training at her country ballet school!

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER - Bernadette O'Mahony

Bernadette O'Mahony has had an extensive career in the Australian film and television industry working across prime time drama, feature film and children's television. She has produced projects including *Crash Zone* Series 1 & 2, *Round the Twist* 3 and *Legacy of the Silver Shadow*. Bernadette Executive Produced and Produced the multi award winning children's series *Mortified*. She is currently Executive Producer on the children's live action series *Lockie Leonard II*; *My Place* and *Dance Academy*. Bernadette is also Head of Development and Production at the Australian Children's Television Foundation.

WRITER/CREATOR - Samantha Strauss

Samantha wrote the first script of *Dance Academy* (then titled *Learning to Fly*) in 2004 and has been developing the series ever since with producer, Joanna Werner.

She is passionate about telling stories for children and young adults that elevate and inspire, and that give a true voice to the teenage experience.

Samantha is currently writing a feature film for Film Depot, with Rachel Griffiths attached to direct. She has previously been nominated for an Australian Writer's Guild Monte Miller Award for her pilot script, *Learning to Fly*, and has written for children's drama series *H2O - Just Add Water*.

Samantha trained as a ballet dancer from the age of three to an elite level - until a broken vertebra caused her to change directions. She's very pleased to call on all those years of tutus, blisters and scary ballet teachers to make *Dance Academy* as authentic as possible. At times, she has been found guilty of vicariously living through her characters and some may suspect that Tara's many embarrassing experiences come directly from real life.

DANCE ACADEMY

DIRECTORS

Jeffrey Walker - Episodes 1-5, 7, 12 & 13

After beginning his career as an actor in the film *Proof* with Russell Crowe and the television series *Round the Twist*, Jeffrey Walker played the lead role of Wayne Wilson in *The Wayne Manifesto*, for which he won an AFI award. He also played lead roles in two of Australia's most popular children's television series produced by Jonathan M. Shiff Productions, *Ocean Girl* and *Thunderstone*. Other acting credits include *Blue Heelers*, *Mirror, Mirror*, and *Banjo Patterson's The Man from Snowy River*.

Jeffrey commenced his training as a director in 2001 and worked as a post production assistant, 2nd unit director and assistant producer on a number of Shiff productions including *Horace and Tina*, *Cybergirl* and *Pirate Islands*.

Jeffrey's directing credits include *Wicked Science II*, *Holly's Hero's*, *Blue Heelers*, *All Saints*, *Neighbours*, *Home and Away*, *Last Man Standing* and *H2O: Just Add Water*. Jeffrey has directed episodes of the Seven Network drama, *City Homicide*, series 1 and 2. Upon completion of his work on *Dance Academy* Jeffrey went straight into pre-production on Chris Lilley's new series *Angry Boys* for HBO.

Jeffrey is 27 years old.

Cherie Nowlan - Episodes 8-11 & 23-26

Cherie Nowlan is one of Australia's most sought after directors.

In 2007, Cherie's film, *Clubland*, starring Oscar nominee Brenda Blethyn and rising star Emma Booth, screened in official selection at the Sundance International Film Festival.

Cherie's first feature, *Thank God He Met Lizzie*, starred Cate Blanchett, Frances O'Connor and Richard Roxburgh. It was nominated for five Australian Film Institute (AFI) awards, and won *Best Supporting Actor in a Supporting role* for Cate Blanchett.

In 2003, she directed the critically acclaimed four-hour mini-series, *Marking Time* for the ABC. The mini-series won a record seven AFI awards in 2004, including Best Director. Other television credits include the multi award-winning drama series, *The Secret Life Of Us*, *The Alice* and *Small Claims*.

Cherie is also an award-winning commercials director and received an AFI nomination for *Best Documentary* for her film, *God's Girls*.

Following the success of *Clubland*, Cherie has focused on television and has worked with the Seven Network on *All Saints*, *Packed to the Rafters* and of course *Dance Academy*.

DANCE ACADEMY

Catriona McKenzie - Episodes 15-18

Catriona McKenzie graduated with Honours in Directing at the Australian Film, Television and Radio School in 2000.

During her time there, Catriona directed numerous critically acclaimed and award winning short films, including *Box*, *The Third Note*, *Road* and *Redfern Beach*.

Catriona soon moved into directing television, credits including *My Place* for Matchbox Pictures and ABC TV; *Satisfaction* for Showtime; set up director for award winning TV series *The Circuit* for Media World Pictures and SBS TV; *RAN* for Chapman Pictures/SBS TV; *The Alice* for Channel 9, *Fire Flies* for ABC TV and *Dance Academy*.

Catriona wrote and directed the multi award documentary *Mr Patterns* for ABC TV and Film Australia and directed the half hour drama *Grange*, written by Reg Cribb for ABC TV. In 2007 Catriona spent time in the US as a director's attachment on the TV series *Prison Break*.

In 2008 Catriona's feature film *Satellite Boy* was accepted into the coveted FTO Aurora program, and is scheduled to shoot in late 2010.

Catriona has also done video installations for National Australian Museum in Canberra and the 4a gallery in Sydney. In August, the Australian Centre of Moving Image at Federation Square Melbourne showcased Catriona's work, including her short films, TV drama work, documentaries and commercials.

Ian Gilmour - Episodes 6, 14, 19 & 20

Ian began performing in high school and subsequently appeared in many television dramas across all Australian networks and 14 feature films including Fred Schepisi's *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith*, John Duigan's *Mouth To Mouth*, Tom Jeffrey's *The Odd Angry Shot*, Dusan Makavejev's *The Coca Cola Kid*, Fred Schepisi's *Evil Angels* ("A Cry in the Dark") and Bill Bennett's *Malpractice*.

Turning to direction, in 1985 Ian graduated from the Australian Film Television and Radio School and soon after went into pre-production on the AFC/PBL telemovie *Double Sculls* for Producer Richard Brennan.

Since then, Ian has directed series, miniseries and telemovies. *Bootleg*, a three hour miniseries which was a Burberry Production for the BBC earned a BAFTA Award for Best Children's Drama and went on to achieve the LOGIE Award for Best Children's Drama. *Bootleg* also gained an ATOM Special Recipient Award - Best Children's Miniseries 2003 plus AFI nominations for Best Director, Best Children's Drama and Best Cinematography Open Craft.

Ian was set-up director for *Black Beauty* (awarded the International TV Programmers' Award at the 1994 New York Festival) His other local credits include *Heartbreak High*, *Twisted Tales*, *Bordertown*, *Phoenix*, *Snowy*, *Mortified* and *Water Rats*. He has directed both series and long form dramas for Paramount, Alliance Atlantis, Ruddy Morgan (in China), UFO Films US, UFA, Gaumont Television, Village Roadshow, Tribune Entertainment and Samuel Goldwyn Television.

In 2008 he was awarded Best Direction in a TV Drama Series by the Australian directors Guild for the *All Saints* episode "Blind Faith" and in 2009 he was awarded Best Direction Television by the Asian Television Awards (Singapore) for another *All Saints* episode "Danger Zone".

DANCE ACADEMY

Ben Chessell - Episodes 21 & 22

Ben Chessell graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2001. His highly acclaimed graduating film, *The Only Person In The World*, was released theatrically with *Italian For Beginners* by Palace Films. It was a finalist at the 2002 Dendy Awards, was nominated for an AFI and awarded Best Short Film by the Australian Circle of Film Critics, as well as screening at over twenty film festivals. Ben went on to make the AFC funded short *Heartworm* and spent six months in Germany where he made *A Familiar Lullaby This Time In German* written by Lally Katz. Ben wrote and directed a fifty minute telemovie for SBSi, *The Heartbreak Tour* with Toby Schmitz, Anthony Hayes, Caroline Craig, Nathaniel Dean and Alexandra Schepisi. *The Heartbreak Tour* was nominated for the 2006 Melbourne Prize for Literature. Ben was supervising post production director on the portmanteau feature *Little Death s-* released in cinemas in Australia in 2010.

Ben is currently developing five feature films - *Writing Rain* with producer Louise Smith at Film Depot (winner of the *Australian Writer's Guild* un-produced screenplay award in 2009), *Sucker* (co-written with Lawrence Leung) with producers Jason Byrne and Greg Sitch, *The Second Law of Thermodynamics* (writer, Rjurik Davidson), *History* (completed as part of his Masters in Screenwriting) and *God's Own* (with two commissioned drafts and development funded by Film Victoria) with producers Brian Rosen, Su Armstrong and Animal Logic.

STORY EDITOR - Liz Doran

Liz Doran is a Sydney-based screenwriter for feature film and television. An AFTRS graduate, Liz has several feature projects in development including, *Valve*, a mystery thriller for Porchlight Films (producer Vincent Sheehan, director Andrew Lancaster) and *Chinese Whispers*, a murder mystery set in Sydney in the 1920's (producer Kath Shelper), which she developed at the 2009/10 Screenwriters Lab at the Binger Film Lab in Amsterdam.

She has written for many primetime drama series including the Emmy Award winning, BAFTA nominated (Best Drama Series) UK drama series, *Sugar Rush*, *The Secret Life of Us* and the AWGIE nominated *Carla Cametti PD*, a 6 x 1 hour drama series for SBS, which was the highest rating locally produced drama in SBS history.

Liz has worked as a script editor on projects as diverse as an animation series, television and film development for SBS Independent and various feature projects including *The Square*, producer Louise Smith, director Nash Edgerton, co-writers Joel Edgerton and Matthew Dabner released in Australia last year and due for US release in 2010.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY - Martin McGrath (ASC)

Martin McGrath's career took off when he shot Jocelyn Moorhouse's *Proof* and the hugely successful *Muriel's Wedding* two years later.

He was nominated for Best Achievement in Cinematography AFI for his work on both *Children of the Revolution* and *Blackrock* and won an AFI for *Passion* starring Judy Davis and Richard Roxburgh.

His other film credits include: *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*; *A Little Bit of Soul*; *Swimming Upstream* (ACS award); *Footy Legends* with Claudia Karvan; and *Irresistible* starring Susan Sarandon and Emily Blunt. Martin shot Second Unit on a number of US productions filmed in Australia including: *Peter Pan*, *Son of Mask* and *Star Wars III Revenge of the Sith*. His television credits include the miniseries *Blue Murder*, *Blackjack*, *Valentine's Day* and the Golden Globe nominated *On the Beach*.

Martin's television credits include the locally produced *Packed to the Rafters* for the Seven Network, docu-dramas *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* and *The Extraordinary Tale of*

DANCE ACADEMY

William Buckley for the ABC along with *Dance Academy*. He is currently working on the TV1 real crime drama series, *Killing Time*.

COMPOSER - Bryony Marks

Bryony composes music for film, TV and theatre productions as well as concert works. Her credits include both of Chris Lilley's award-winning series, *We can be heroes* and *Summer Heights High*. Her score for Matthew Saville's debut feature, *Noise*, won her the 2007 AFCA Award for Best Music. She has recently completed work on the series, *Tangle*, for Southern Star.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER - Murray Picknett

Murray has designed nine feature films, including most recently, 'Black and White', 'Solo' and 'The Final Winter'. He has two AFI awards for best Production Design for the Percy Grainger, period film 'Passion' and the Newcastle tap dancing film 'Bootmen'. His extensive TV credits include designing one of the most influential Australian mini-series 'Blue Murder' and the successful drama series 'Police Rescue' and 'Heartbreak High'.

COSTUME DESIGNER - Nina Edwards

Costume Designer Nina Edwards' first job was as an assistant at the ABC on the large period 1940's show *Come In Spinner*. Since then Nina has worked her way through the ranks, in many varied positions across a diverse slate of projects including the Baz Luhrmann epic *Australia* and the feature *Accidents Happen*. Nina is currently designing the new ABC series *Rake*.

HAIR & MAKE-UP DESIGNER - Nikki Gooley

Nikki Gooley is a highly recognised international Feature Film Makeup and Hair Designer. After completing Fine Arts at TAFE, Nikki studied at 3 Arts Makeup School in Sydney, Australia. From there she began working as a makeup assistant and then later as a Makeup Artist on small Australian films. Nikki Won a British Academy Award and a Saturn Award for her design work on *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Lion*, *The Witch and The Wardrobe*, as well as being nominated for an Academy Award for *Star Wars Return of the Sith*. Other work includes *The Matrix*, *Superman Returns*, *Wolverine*, and *Nims Island*, where she was Jodie Fosters personal Makeup Artist. Other actors Nikki has worked with include Cate Blanchett, Julianna Margulies, Kate Bosworth, Samuel L Jackson, Matthew McConaughey, Geoffrey Rush and Tilda Swinton. Nikki divides her time to work both in Australia and Internationally.

DANCE ACADEMY

CAST

TARA WEBSTER
KATRINA “KAT” KARAMAKOV
ABIGAIL ARMSTRONG
SAMMY LIEBERMAN
ETHAN KARAMAKOV
CHRISTAIN REED

Xenia Goodwin
Alicia Banit
Dena Kaplan
Tom Green
Tim Pocock
Jordan Rodrigues

Regular Guest Cast

MISS RAINE
MR KENNEDY
PATRICK
SEAN
TIM - ETHAN’S MATE
BONNIE
HAZEL
DR WICKS

Tara Morice
Robert Alexander
Josef Brown
Matt Lee
Stephen Multari
Shayni Notelovitz
Claire Cohen
Anne Looby

Episodic Guest Cast

Episode 1

YOUNG TARA
NEIL WEBSTER
GEORGIA

Tahlie Gavin
Steve Vidler
Olivia Cianci

Episode 2

NEIL WEBSTER
JAN WEBSTER
ISABELLE
MISS HISTEAD
TIKKINOVA
CAFÉ WAITRESS - GLORIA
TARA JUMP DOUBLE
KAT JUMP DOUBLE

Steve Vidler
Vanessa Gray
Cariba Heine
Deborah Kennedy
Zika Nester
Susan Honeybrook
Marlee Barber
Sarah Grieve

Episode 3

ISABELLE
LEGAL AID LAWYER
AARON
JOEL
POLICEMAN
POLICEWOMAN
CHRISTIAN STUNT DOUBLE
AARON STUNT DOUBLE

Cariba Heine
Alice Parkinson
Luke Bracey
Neal Horton
David Palfrey
Elizabeth McLean
Judd Wild
Ben Toyer

DANCE ACADEMY

CAST

Episode 4

ISABELLE
REVHEAD
REVHEAD DRIVER

Cariba Heine
Jackson Heywood
Judd Wild

Episode 5

DR LIEBERMAN
MRS LIEBERMAN
ARI LIEBERMAN
GROUNDSMAN

Tony Cugin
Monique Spanbrook
Narek Armaganian
Joseph Williams

Episode 6

NATASHA WILLIS
MIA
CAROLINE
SWAN LAKE CYGNETS

Victoria Hill
Alycia Debnam-Carey
Penny Cook
Eloise Fryer
Brooke Lockett
Sharni Spencer
Jessica Wood
Tzu-Chao Chou
Rani Luther

MALE BALLET DANCER
NATASHA DANCING DOUBLE

Episode 7

ISABELLE
KAYLAH
TWEAK
HIP HOP TEACHER

Cariba Heine
Kat Risteska
Joel de Carteret
David Dennis

Episode 8

DAMIEN
HAYLEY
DR WICKS

Stuart McRae
Kym Thorne
Anne Looby

Episode 9

MYLES KELLY
DANA
TRISTANNE
VJ
VIDEOCLIP DIRECTOR
VIDEOCLIP DANCERS

Adam Saunders
Melanie Vallejo
Olivia Simone
Maz Compton
Morgan Smallbone
Danielle Cook
Karlee Misipeka
Jessica Stokes
Helen Sweeney

OLD LADY

DANCE ACADEMY

CAST

Episode 10

AARON
JULIANNA
SERGEANT ANDREWS

Luke Bracey
Arianthe Galani
Brett Williams

Episode 11

PAIGE
DANA
SILVERMAN
PAS DE QUATRE DANCERS

Zoe Ioannou
Melanie Vallejo
Nao Abby
Nicole Mitchell
Kristin Scott

Episode 12

KISSING GIRL
KISSING BOY

Kristelle McKinnon
Adam Chavolla Sheet

Episode 13

NATASHA WILLIS
NEIL WEBSTER
JAN WEBSTER
MRS LIEBERMAN
ARI LIEBERMAN
PIP THE JOURNALIST

Victoria Hill
Steve Vidler
Vanessa Gray
Monique Spanbrook
Narek Armaganian
Suzannah McDonald

Episode 14

ADAM THE PSYCHOLOGIST
LUCAS
SOLOMON
BUBBEH LIEBERMAN
JOE
GRETA

Socratis Otto
Andrew Hazzard
Dorian Nkono
Lola Nixon
Jack Webster
Carmel Mullin

Episode 15

PETRA
LUCAS
GUS
SCOUT

Maria Dragus
Andrew Hazzard
Travis Cardona
Ashleigh Ross

Episode 16

PETRA
LUCAS
OLDER GIRL 1
OLDER GIRL 2
PASHING BOY

Maria Dragus
Andrew Hazzard
Ellie McLeod
Camelia Mowbray
Conor Fogarty

DANCE ACADEMY

CAST

Episode 17

PETRA
MISS HISTEAD
ISABELLE

Maria Dragus
Deborah Kennedy
Cariba Heine

Episode 18

PETRA
SCOUT

Maria Dragus
Ashleigh Ross

Episode 19

JAI
OLLIE
TIKKINOVA

Chris Foy
Burgess Abernethy
Zika Nester

Episode 20

NATASHA WILLIS
SHELLEY
HIP HOP TEACHER
NATASHA DANCING DOUBLE
TARA STUNT DOUBLE

Victoria Hill
Millie Spencer-Brown
David Dennis
Rani Luther
Inge Sildnik

Episode 21

DAMIEN
DR WICKS

Stuart McRae
Anne Looby

Episode 22

DR WICKS
KAYLAH
JAMES - LEGAL AID LAWYER

Anne Looby
Kat Risteska
Henry Nixon

Episode 23

AARON
KAYLAH
JAMES - LEGAL AID LAWYER
PATRICK'S DANCE PARTNER
DELIVERY GUY

Luke Bracey
Kat Risteska
Henry Nixon
Morgan Choice
Neil Sharma

Episode 24

SEBASTIAN KARAMAKOV
PAIGE

Peter O'Brien
Zoe Ioannou

Episode 25

SEBASTIAN KARAMAKOV
MYLES KELLY
ADAM THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Peter O'Brien
Adam Saunders
Socratis Otto

DANCE ACADEMY

CAST

Episode 26

SEBASTIAN KARAMAKOV

MYLES KELLY

MRS LIEBERMAN

ARI LIEBERMAN

PRODUCTION RUNNER

YOUNG NATASHA

JOSIE

OLGA

AUDITION GIRL

Peter O'Brien

Adam Saunders

Monique Spanbrook

Narek Armaganian

James Fraser

Chloe Bayliss

Fenella McKirdy

Suzi-Ann Ryan

Alysha Chan

DANCE ACADEMY

CREW

Producer / Co-Creator	Joanna Werner
Executive Producers	Bernadette O'Mahony (ACTF) Joanna Werner Nicole Keeb, Arne Lohmann (ZDF) Carla de Jong (ABC)
Directors	Jeffrey Walker Cherie Nowlan Catriona McKenzie Ian Gilmour Ben Chessell
Editors	Mark Perry Geoff Lamb Simon Martin James Manche Rodrigo Balart
Line Producer	Ally Henville
Assistant Producer	Jessica Leslie
Production Coordinator	Emily Cameron
Production Secretary	Elisa Chaffer
Production Runner	Neil Sharma
Extras Coordinators	Dex Tallo, Morgan Smallbone
Production Accountant	Ben Breen
1 st Assistant Directors	Tom Read Keith Heygate Jason Holman Karan Monkhouse John (JC) Clabburn
2nd Assistant Director	Matthew Grossman
3rd Assistant Director	Tremaine Egan
Continuity	Oksana Sokol Kristin Voumard Jo Weeks Karen Mansfield

DANCE ACADEMY

CREW

Writer/Creator
Story Editor
Script Editor
Script Coordinator
Scriptwriters

Samantha Strauss
Liz Doran
Greg Waters
Courtney Wise
Samantha Strauss, Sam Carroll, David Ogilvy,
Michael Miller, Deborah Parsons,
Sarah Lambert, Matt Ford, David Hannam,
Max Dann, Greg Waters, Alicia Walsh,
Ellie Beaumont, Liz Doran

Director of Photography
Camera Operators
Focus Pullers
Clapper Loader
Camera Attachments

Martin McGrath ASC
Marc Spicer, Simon Harding
Gerard Maher, Damian Church
Megan Farnsworth
Anna Slowiaczek, Rudge Hollis, Tim Walsh
Lilly Maher, Kyle Mathis, Stephen Ta

Gaffer
Best Boys

Ben Dugard
Russell Fewtrell
Jonathan Martin
Garfield Darlington, Mitchell Sweeney

Electrics

Key Grip
Dolly Grip
Grip Assistant

Paul (Mico) Micallef
Craig (Jacko) Jackson
Aaron Rapira

Sound Recordist
Boom Operator
Sound Attachments

Tim Lloyd
Todd Kirkness
Gemma Yared, Josh Harper, Alison Moore,
Luke Cavalan, Peter Climpson, Scott McInnes
Julien Borelli, Richard King

Location Manager
Location Assistants

Gabrielle Sinclair
Suzy Johnson, Hayley Staveley

Production Designer
Art Director
Art Dept Coordinator
Buyer/Dressers
Art Dept Runner
Standby Props
Standby Assistants

Murray Picknett
Victoria Williams
Diane Snape
Natalie Armstrong, Sam Lukins, Shane Melder
Angus Paine
Dillon Yeats, Katie Lenehan
Max McClellan, Anna de Meryck

Construction Manager
Construction Crew
Dance Equipment

Michael Bernauer
MJB Set Construction
STM Studio Supplies

DANCE ACADEMY

CREW

Costume Designer	Nina Edwards
Costume Supervisor	Damir Peranovic
Standby Costume	Dan Owen
Costume Assistant	Kylie Sayers
Makeup/Hair Designer	Nikki Gooley
Makeup/Hair Artist	Paige Badenoch
Makeup/Hair Assistant	Dalia Fernandez
Unit Managers	Felix Reiten, John Wheeler
Unit Assistants	David Page, Brendan Fitzgerald, Jeff Nicholson, Toby Jonathan-Petch
Casting Director	Lynne Ruthven
Tutor	Carla Moore
Drama Coach	Helen O'Connor
Unit Nurse	Suzanne Richards
Safety Supervisors	Richard Boue, Gordon Waddell, Brian Ellison, Greg Robinson
Stunt Co-ordinators	Richard Boue, Spike Cherrie
Dance Supervisors	Stephen Colyer, Lisa O'Dea
Hip Hop Choreographers	Marko Panzic, Joel Rasmussen, Ilona Fabiszewski
Pas De Deux Choreographers	Stephen Colyer, Joshua Consandine
Contemporary Choreographer	Sarah Boulter
Acrobatics Choreographer	Lorry D'ercole
Original Music	Bryony Marks
Music Supervisor	Jessica Moore, Level Two Music
Classroom Piano Music performed by	Michael Tyack
Caterers	Fringe Benefit Catering
Stills Photographers	Lisa Tomasetti, Mark Rogers, Steve Bracks, Ludwik Dabrowski
Publicity	Karen Farrell & Pat Breese, Strut PR
Post Production Supervisor	Ray Daley
Assistant Editor	Adam Glover
Post Production Facilities	Digital Pictures
Head of Post Production	Rachel Knowles
Post Production Supervisor	Carol Johnson
Post Production Co-ordinator	Catherine Armstrong

DANCE ACADEMY

CREW

HD Colorist	Deidre McClelland
HD Mastering	Sarah Robertson
Quality Assurance	Peter Peric
Rushes Facility	The Lab, Sydney
Title Design	Iloura
Audio Post Production	Soundfirm Australia
Sound Editors	Ralph Ortner, Simon Rosenberg
Sound Mixer	Ralph Ortner
ADR Recording	Liesl Pieterse
Facilities Liaison	Kathy Charles
Aerial Footage	Film Helicopters Australia
Camera & Lenses supplied by	Lemac
Unit Vehicles	Empire Film Services
Studio & Office Facilities	ABC Resource Sales
Travel Services	Stage & Screen
Legal Advisors	Julia Adams, Shiff & Company
Insurance	H.W. Wood Australia, Tony Gibbs
Completion Guarantor	First Australian Completion Bond Company Corrie Soeterboek
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