Letter from the Captain

To our most beloved team and family,

We hope you are enjoying the full swing of summer and your well-deserved break! We can’t believe it’s here already. It has truly been wonderful watching all of you grow as dancers and as friends. It is now our pleasure to reflect on the eventful year that has just come to an end.

We began with Camp Yale and re-uniting our veteran dancers after the long summer. While handing out pamphlets at our get-to-know-you “Chips n’ Salsa” event and performing in our first Icebreaker showcase, everyone joined in the spirit and helped with recruitment for this year’s newcomers (Newbies!) From then on, our remarkable Newbie captains achieved the impressive feat of preparing students for competition—many of them completely new to dance—in six different dances, in less than two months. We do this every year, but it never ceases to amaze us.

We kicked off the competition season with none other than our very own 25th Annual Yale Ballroom Dance Competition. To this day, we can imagine no greater team-bonding activity than waking up at 5am to transform the entire Wilbur Cross High School gym into a ballroom competition venue. Thank you to the efforts of our events committee and the incredible Caroleen Verly, who ensured that our competition ran as smoothly as ever. All of our advanced dancers contributed to help create an unforgettable experience and give our Newbies their very first taste of competition—congrats to those who made all-Yale finals!) It was especially heartening to see non-competing members give their time to come and help out.

Following Yale Comp, we continued practicing, bonding, and working our way up to the other competitions of the year—UConn Husky Classic, Columbia’s Big Apple Dancesport Challenge, Boston University’s Terrier Dancesport Competition, Harvard’s Invitational, and Rhode Island College’s Ballroom Dance Competition. We worked closely with our wonderful Standard and Latin coaches and are proud of our strong showing at each and every competition. Congratulations to all who finaled (placements at the end of the newsletter)! Most of all, we hope everyone has collected fond memories from each competition—ones we hope you think back to years from now.

In addition to competitions, YBDT put on several outstanding performances in the spring. Our 7th annual Winter Ball in Davenport reunited everyone from break and kicked the semester off to another amazing start. From fun-packed jives to elegant waltzes, our show had it all. Newbies stepped foot on stage for the first time and owned every inch of the floor. Spring Show in Yale’s Off-Broadway Theater continued our amazing streak, with each dance leading our audience every step of the way. Despite the blizzard during YBDT’s unforgettable tour in Boston, we still put a smile on everyone’s face, dancer and audience member alike, in each place we visited. Our Bulldog Days event, Caliente, successfully wrapped up the shows for the year and even introduced us to some future Newbies.
I went into being social chair this semester with a lot of dread: What if no one comes to any of the events? Will the Newbies like me? If people do come, will they have fun? Are the social emails going to be terrible to write? I shouldn’t have worried. I’ve loved being social chair: team emails are way more fun to write than I had anticipated and the Newbies aren’t nearly as scary as they seemed at first. With a fireworks-worthy Excomm Retreat, Newbie Initiation, ice cream brunches, movie nights, board game/Twister tournaments, and scary stories followed by hide-and-seek in Sterling Library, it’s been a wonderful few months. We’ve also continued with our time-honored Tuesday team dinners (so successfully attended that we frequently have had to colonize tables) and Friday night parties. Between slices of pie and glasses of hot apple cider, a monster was created when Zach Belway introduced our team to lifts during October Retreat; and I will never forget watching everyone (men included) experiment with belly dancing – your shimmies are astounding! - Ally (Social Chair)

Letter from Captain - Continued

But as much as we have danced together, we have also found time for each other outside of Yale’s dance studios. We’ve shared countless dinners in Trumbull Dining Hall, raided social events of all flavors, and of course, our very own YBDT parties. From our glorious initiation night for our Newbies to our elaborate banquet honoring our seniors, ballroom has brought us together into the tight-knit and inclusive community we love so much today.

And now, we want to thank all of you—Newbie or advanced dancer, freshman or upperclassman—for being a special and beloved part of our team. Special shout-out to members of our executive committee for being committed to their duties, patient during our long meetings, and fully invested in the future of our team. It has been a privilege serving as your captains this year. We look forward to seeing all of you return for the fabulous shows, tours, and competitions planned for next year.

Ballroom love,
James Diao and Elizabeth Li
Captains, 2016-2017

From the Newbie Captains, with Love

Dear Friends and Family,

This year, we had the honor of serving as the Newbie Captains for the Yale Ballroom Dance Team, and what an adventure it was! Teaching the Newbies was exciting, challenging and inspiring all at once, and we are extremely proud to see just how far they have come since the Fall.

At the beginning of September, we taught the ~100 people that showed up to our first lessons! Those who stayed became our brave, eager, energetic Newbies, a fundamental part of both the ever-growing YBDT community and of our year as Newbie Captains. Now, almost a year later, their commitment to dance has given wonderful results. In fact, after just nine months of Ballroom, the Newbies (now Bronze-level dancers!) competed in - and sometimes won- the 6 competitions the team attended during the year. Newbies also performed excellent pieces in our Winter Ball, Tour and Spring Shows, joined several of YBDT’s board positions, and brought immense love and excitement into the team!
Newbie Captains - Continued

It is almost impossible to summarize the year in these short lines: nearly 50 lessons, 6 competitions, 4 shows, and uncountable dances shared with the Newbies. We have both grown as dancers and as people, have inspired and (been inspired by) the Newbies about dancing, and have found many great friends within the Newbie class. In fact, the most enjoyable part of being Newbie Captains has been to watch this group grow closer together and start enjoying Ballroom with the same passion we devote to it. We are sure that, in the years to come, the ’16-’17 Newbies will strongly represent what Ballroom (and YBDT) is all about: enjoying incredible dancing with a wonderful group of people.

We have received nothing but love from this Newbie group and from the YBDT community; we are extremely honored we had the chance to give some of this love back to the group. And to the Newbies, we will say this one last time: Newbies, Assemble!

-Ally Smith & Luis Fernando, Newbie Captains

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Touring Boston

During spring break, fifteen dancers from the Yale Ballroom Dance Team traveled to the Boston area to dance and share our stories with our audiences. With an hour-long show consisting of seventeen different showpieces, the team danced their hearts out for many of the Boston area’s nursing homes and residents. Each performance was special as we interacted with the audience at the end of each show, speaking with residents about our experiences in ballroom, our favorite dances, and hearing stories about some of the residents’ own history with ballroom.

We made many special memories during our performances as we watched each show as if it were the first time, laughing and sharing with each resident, including a former professional Standard dancer! We also teared up as Kristy Loya performed her last showpiece on the Yale Ballroom Dance Team, a gorgeous and dramatic waltz to Across the Stars from Star Wars. In addition to sharing our joy of dance, tour served as an incredible opportunity for YBDT to spend time with one another and grow stronger as a team. Despite a snowstorm that shut down the city for a day, we shared pizza at Connie’s home, transformed an Ann Taylor, a professional women’s clothing store, into the new YBDT costume closet, and sang Disney songs at the top of our lungs during an impromptu Karaoke night.

Boston will always be a special memory for me and I want to thank everyone for making the struggles worth it and performing their best each day. It was such a joy to watch you all and I will never forget the crazy lifts, the Newbies shaking it, the intense tango battles, and the heart that I saw in each dance. It was an absolute pleasure to serve as Tour Manager this year.

-Melissa Kropf, Tour Manager

The 2017-2018 Executive Committee

Co-Captains:
Ariel Sánchez & Gloria Wu
Newbie Captains:
Melissa Kropf & Tuna Uysal
Advanced Seminar Directors:
Pratik Gandhi & Elizabeth Li
Treasurer: Kat Tan
Club Director: Cathy Xue
Team Manager: Héctor Ricardo Hernández
Show Coordinator: Karen Yao
Publicity Director: Richard Baker
Tour Manager: Stephanie Hickman
Social Chair: Sophie Xu
Events Committee:
Pratik Gandhi, Emma Garcia, Luis Fernando, James Diao, & Katy Way
Performances

Winter Ball

Winter Ball is the Yale Ballroom Dance Team’s premier show of the year. It is an annual gala (formal attire requested), showcasing four styles of ballroom dance as well as dancers of all levels and experience. As in past years the show was put on in the lovely Davenport dining hall and common room, and guests were invited for a night full of music, dancing and food!

The evening began with a lovely formal reception featuring live music and the team’s new very own chocolate fountain! Soon everyone moved into the dining hall, where our Newbies showed off their newfound skills with a fun cha cha and a dramatic tango, while our advanced dancers put on a record number of fantastic pieces. With everything from a romantic viennese waltz to a cute group foxtrot to a sexy samba from our seniors, there was something for everyone to enjoy! The evening concluded with a dance party, where audience members were invited to try out some of the new moves they just learned and hang out with the team.

- Emma Garcia, Show Coordinator

Spring Show

YBDT returned to the Off-Broadway Theatre this year to put on our Spring Show. Knowing what the theatre had to offer, the team took full advantage of the technical capabilities of the OBT to enhance their pieces with lighting, as well as with props. This year the theme was “Moments” which the team took to mean “dramatic Moments.” With a grand total of five breakups and two deaths, the show was definitely full of drama, but some silly jive and cha cha added some humor to the mix. Our Newbies starred in their first pieces choreographed by themselves and showed off their new bronze moves. Our seniors said goodbye with a fun Paso Doble and a heartfelt Rumba, and were given parting gifts of flowers and a peacock feather. Overall, the show was a great celebration of YBDT and was a fantastic end to the year!

- Emma Garcia, Show Coordinator

(Famil)YBDT

Though (as our name suggests) dancing is an integral part of the YBDT, we also take pride in our community. We are very much a family that supports each other through the craziness that ballroom, Yale, and life can be. As a Newbie last year, I felt at home. As social chair, I hoped to help the incoming class feel the same way while fostering a sense of community through the entire team.

This year, we bonded through cherished classics such as our weekly team dinners, social dances, and Insomnia cookie study breaks. At our beloved ballroom retreat, we learned bhangra, practiced lifts and even carved a YBDT pumpkin together. Our Secret Santa event involved a whopping 38 members. New additions, such as movie nights and Ballroom Siblings, were also very well-received.

Through all these events, we’ve grown closer as a team as we danced, ate, and laughed together. It’s been a fantastic year and I am excited for the next one!

- Gloria Wu, Social Chair
Competition Results

Yale

Newcomers
Am - Cha Cha
1. Surya & Nico
5. Sophie & Kaya

Am - Swing
1. Kendra & Camila

Am - Waltz
1. Kaya & Teeger
4. Surya & Amanda

Am - Foxtrot
1. Kaya & Teeger
2. Surya & Amanda

Int - Waltz
1. Kaya & Yi Chern
4. Surya & Kendra
6. Mohamed & Amanda
7. Diane & TBA

Int - Tango
2. Surya & Kendra
3. Kaya & Yi Chern

Int - Cha Cha
4. Diane & Yongjie
6. Sophie & Thomas

Int - Rumba
1. Kendra & Yi Chern
3. Kaya & Yuki

Partnerships
Kevin & Connie
3. Gold Am Cha/Rumba
4. Gold Am Swing/Mambo
4. Gold Int Cha/Rumba
3. Gold Int. Samba/Jive

Luke & Kristy
6. Silver Samba
5. Gold Latin (CR)
5. Gold Latin (SJ)
5. Syllabus Paso

Pratik & Connie
5. Silver Int. Tango
6. Silver Int. Foxtrot

Pratik & Christina
2. Bronze Int Cha Cha
3. Bronze Int Rumba

Tuna & Melissa
7. Bronze Am Foxtrot

Int - Tango
3. Kaya & Chris
5. Mohamed & Katy

Am - Cha Cha
1. Mohamed & Amanda
3. Kaya & Alexander

Int - Cha Cha
1. Mohamed & Amanda

Int - Rumba
1. Mohamed & Amanda
2. Kaya & Alexander

Partnerships
Luke & Kristy
5. Silver Standard (WQ)
5. Silver Standard Foxtrot
4. Silver Standard Tango
4. Syllabus Paso Doble
6. Golden Latin (CR)
6. Gold Latin (SJ)
4. Gold Standard (WQ)
4. Gold Standard (TF)

Luis & Elizabeth
3. Bronze Int Waltz
3. Bronze Int. Tango

3. Bronze Int Quickstep
4. Bronze Am Tango
5. Bronze Am Waltz
5. Bronze Am Foxtrot

Elizabeth & Andy
1. Silver Int Cha Cha
1. Silver Int. Rumba
1. Silver Int. Samba
2. Silver Int. Jive

Tuna & Stephanie
4. Bronze Am Swing
4. Bronze Am Rumba
3. Bronze Am Cha Cha
6. Bronze Int. Rumba
5. Bronze Int. Cha Cha

Melissa & Tuna
4. Bronze Am Waltz

UConn

Newcomers
Am - Waltz
4. Kaya & Chris
6. Mohamed & Katy

Am - Foxtrot
4. Mohamed & Katy

Int - Waltz
5. Mohamed & Kathy
7. Kaya & Chris

James & Ally
3. Silver Am Tango
5. Silver Am Waltz
7. Silver Am Foxtrot
8. Silver Int. Foxtrot

Elizabeth & Luis
2. Bronze Int Waltz
2. Bronze Int Tango
2. Bronze Int Quickstep
2. Bronze Am Tango
4. Bronze Am Waltz
6. Bronze Am Foxtrot

Ally & Cathy
7. Bronze Am Swing

Melissa & Gloria
3. Bronze Am Rumba
8. Bronze Int Jive

Tuna & Stephanie
2. Bronze Am Cha Cha
6. Bronze Int. Rumba

James & Ally
3. Silver Am Tango
5. Silver Am Waltz
7. Silver Am Foxtrot
8. Silver Int. Foxtrot

Editor: Héctor Ricardo Hernández
Columbia Partnerships
Luis & Elizabeth
6 - Bronze Standard (WT)
Elizabeth & Andy
3 - Silver Int Samba
4 - Silver Int Jive

Harvard Partnerships
Andy & Elizabeth
5 - Gold Samba/Jive

Rhode Island Partnerships
Pratik & Sophia
3 - Gold Standard (WTFQ)

Boston University Partnerships
Melissa & Gloria
6 - Bronze Latin Overall
5 - Bronze Rhythm Overall
3 - Bronze Am Rumba
6 - Bronze Am Cha Cha
5 - Bronze Int. Rumba
6 - Bronze Int. Cha Cha
6 - Bronze Int. Jive

Andy & Elizabeth
2 - Silver Int. Cha/Rumba
4 - Silver Int. Samba/Jive

Melissa & Tuna
4 - Bronze Int. Tango
4 - Bronze Int. Waltz
6 - Bronze Int. Quickstep
4 - Bronze International Overall

Q&A

Why did you decide to join the ballroom team?
I had experience with some other dance types, but it had been on my bucket list for a long time to try out ballroom and see if I had two left feet when it came to that style of dance. - Kaya '19

Can I be a Newbie again? - Kevin '17

Which dance is your favorite?
Bolero, it is both sensual and sophisticated. A dignified romance that transcends petty lust - Bobby '18

Jazzy Foxtrot is my favorite! It reminds me of the big band era and the smooth, in-the-mood singing of Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald etc. - Sophia SOM '17

Last year, I managed to weasel out of dancing Quickstep at competitions. This year, I realized the fun I was missing out on. - Héctor '19

Oh the Viennese Waltz! The Champs’ Dance! The original ballroom dance! I’ll never miss the chance of dancing it when the right song plays - Luis '18

What is your favorite showpiece this year?
My favorite showpiece was Try, a Rumba [I did] with Gloria. I really connected with the music and the message of the song. Believing in yourself and being confident in your body is very important to me, so I was hoping that our piece would be a source of inspiration for Yale students who watched. - Melissa '19

I really loved Luke and Stephanie’s “Married Life” from Disney’s Up (Viennese Waltz)! It was very creative, memorable, and told the love story faithfully. Sighs and “awws” could be heard throughout the crowd. Go check it out on our YouTube channel! - Saran '18

What is your favorite memory relating to the ballroom team this semester?
Surprising Luis for his birthday with Brazilian soda, and his Newbies parading in late for lesson with a “Newbies assemble” poster. - Ally '18

Tour (and being snowed in)! My first blizzard experience was spent with the amazing people part of the Waltzing Wagon (aka Erner Jr.) crew. So many precious memories and inside jokes from that unforgettable experience <3 - Elizabeth '19

Ballroom for the past two years has served as my family on Yale’s campus. Despite our team members coming from many different backgrounds and cultures, we share a special bond - a love for dance. I am really looking forward to being Newbie Captain with Tuna next year. I can’t wait to mother [the Newbies] like crazy. - Melissa '19

My final pieces for shows! Ahhh, I’m graduating next year? - Saran '18
Merchandise and Sponsorship

YBDT items make for great gifts for the whole family! If you would like to support our team by making a purchase, please visit our website at http://shopcampuscustumes.com/yaleballroomdance. Below are the merchandise we have to offer. All cloth items are embroidered:

- **Logo T-Shirt**  
  Price: $18.00

- **Logo Ladies’ Polo Shirt**  
  Price: $30.00

- **Logo Men’s Polo Shirt**  
  Price: $30.00

- **Logo Ladies’ Fleece Jacket**  
  Price: $42.00

- **Logo Men’s Fleece Jacket**  
  Price: $42.00

- **Logo Long Sleeve Shirt**  
  Price: $22.00

- **Logo Sweatpants**  
  Price: $25.00

- **Logo Baseball Cap**  
  Price: $17.00

- **Logo Fleece Blanket**  
  Price: $28.00

- **Logo Mug**  
  Price: $10.00

- **Logo Garment Bag**  
  Price: $32.00

- **Logo Ladies’ Fleece Jacket**  
  Price: $42.00

... and more!

I would like to help support YBDT!

Enclosed is a donation of:

- [ ] $50 – Bronze (prize: name on website, receive a mug)
- [ ] $150 – Silver (prize: above plus fleece jacket, name in competition program)
- [ ] $500 – Gold (prize: above plus personalized team jacket, not shown above)
- [ ] $1000 – Champion (prize: please contact our PR manager below for details)
- [ ] Other: $_________

Name: ______________________________

Email: ______________________________

Please make all checks payable to “University Ballroom Dance.” Please mail donations to the YBDT P.O. Box: Héctor Hernández (YBDT), P.O. Box 204794, New Haven, CT 06520. Contact our Publicity Director at webmaster@yaleballroom.org if you have any questions, or would like to donate shoes, costumes, or other ballroom-related items.

Alternatively you may make donation using PayPal through our website: http://yaleballroom.org/resources/pages/donations.html

Thank you!