

Tribeca Citizen | Dancing on Broadway

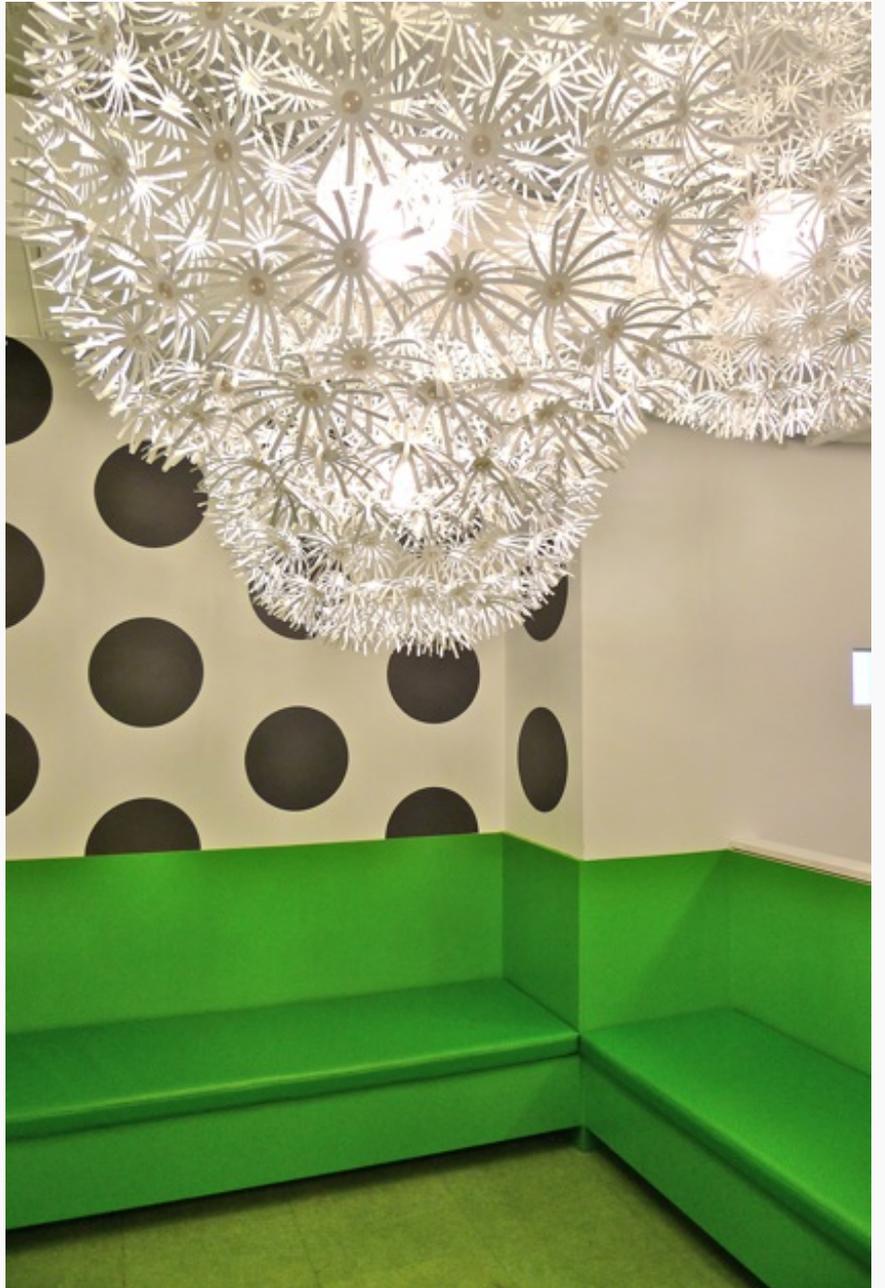
“We did our business plan at Ward Ill, Warren 77, Edward’s, Petite Abeille, Kaffe 1668....” says Downtown Dance Factory’s Melanie Zrihen (above left). Her co-founder, Hanne Larsen (above right), adds, “We can tell you everywhere in the neighborhood where you can eat and get wi-fi!”

One year after launching, they now have an office to call their own—and a whole lot more. The brand-new Downtown Dance Factory is the entire fifth floor of 291 Broadway (at Reade), where Zrihen and Larsen have converted 6,300 square feet of what used to be part of the Globe Institute of Technology into three studios, girls’ and boys’ restrooms, a girl’s changing room, and a room for stroller parking. Tribeca-based Ghislaine Vinas Interior Design helped make it as exuberant as a dance space should be, with block polka dots, a wall of photos of DDF students taken by Angela Weir, black-and-white tiles, splashes of bright pink and green, and—to be hung soon in the girls’ changing room—two chandeliers made with Barbie dolls. More practically, the studios have narrow windows placed high enough that parents can watch their kids without making the kids self-conscious.



Naturally, DDF will also offer birthday parties: with “ballerina princess” or “ballerina fairy” themes, a Friday-night disco party, a party the birthday boy/girl can be the star of a choreographed routine, or a “block party jam” with B-boy Ivan.

DDF also has no-registration-necessary classes for adults—and if the participants have half the fun the kids clearly have (you can hear the joy coming through the studio walls), they sure beat jogging on a treadmill.



The lobby/waiting area



One of the three studios

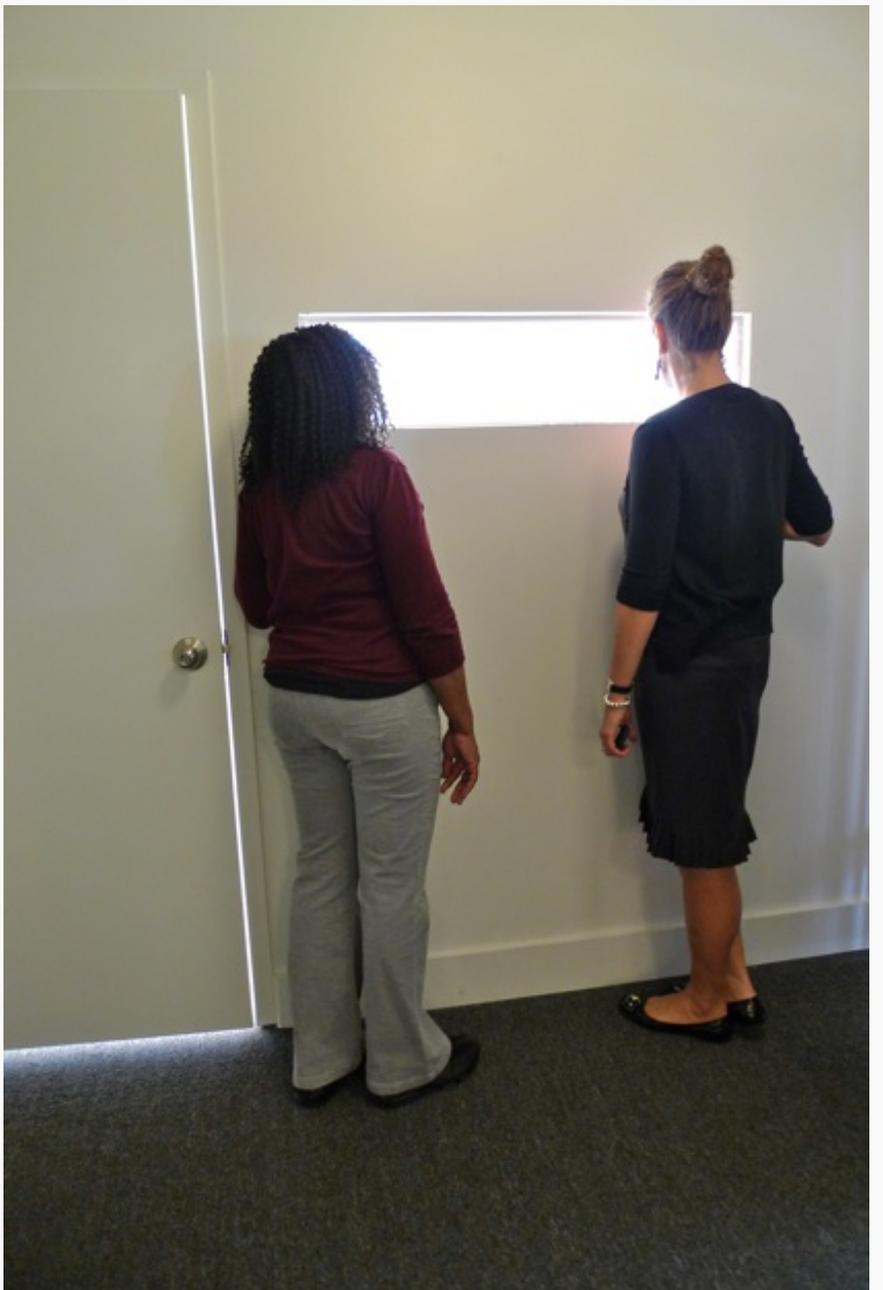


Wall of photos by Angela Weir





There's now space to sell more DDF gear



The windows for parents





The boys' restroom





One of the two to-be-hung Barbie chandeliers