

BALLET SAN JOSE

S I L I C O N V A L L E Y

PRESS RELEASE

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Ballet School Commendation Ceremony at San Jose City Council 13 September 2005

In June, Ballet San Jose SCHOOL took home major honors in two categories when they competed in DANCE GRAND PRIX "ITALIA", 2005. And now the non-profit training arm of Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley has been honored once again...this time with a City Commendation issued by The San Jose City Council. The award, spearheaded by Councilmember David D. Cortese of District 8, and co-sponsored by Mayor Ron Gonzales, Vice mayor and District 3 Councilmember Cindy Chavez and District 2 Councilmember Forrest Williams, the commendation recognizes the school for two first place finishes in the competition.



Councilmember Dave Cortese (at podium) reads the San Jose City Commendation presented to Ballet San Jose SCHOOL. Shown left to right in back are: Mayor Ron Gonzales, councilmember Cindy Chavez, School Director Lise la Cour, Associate Director Jodi Porter and dancers Peter Hershey, Travis Walker (partially obscured) Erena Ishii, and Damir Emric.

Billed as "the biggest WorldDanceEvent in Europe", the competition was held at the Bonci Theatre in Cesena, Italy from June 22nd to 26th. Over 100 groups and 600 dancers (from Italy, Germany, Serbia and as far away as Brazil and Peru) competed for prizes in dance styles including Ballet, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Hip Hop and Folk.

Ballet San Jose students Jaclyn Betham and Shannon Bynum along with past students Philip Ingrassia, Autumn Hill, Damir Emric and Erena Ishii and company members Peter Hershey and Travis Walker brought home a first place trophy in the Classical Ballet competition with school director Lise la Cour's "Sky-Lite" set to Strauss, and a first place in the Characteristic Competition for Associate School Director Jodi Porter's modern piece, "Sunset Tango" set to Gotan Project.

It would be an understatement to say that the trip did not start off well. The eight dancers, la Cour, and Porter left for the airport in the pre-dawn hours of Saturday, June 18th to board their flight to Italy. Two days (44 hours) and four planes later, they finally arrived after having to sit through one cancelled flight, several overbooked flights and four different airports. After eventually landing in Venice (and discovering that 2 of the group had lost their luggage) they still had a 20-minute bus ride and a 2 1/2 hour train trip to their hotel in Cesena. Then they wound up 4 and 6 to a room and had to scramble to find rehearsal space before competition began the next morning. But once they took the floor at the Grand Prix they showed the world just what they were made of, winning Firsts with both of the dances they performed. "Well, I was always told that sometimes you have to suffer for your art", said Porter. "It was worth it!"

Luckily the flight back home took only 23 hours with one 4-hour layover in Philadelphia.

Congratulations to Ballet San Jose SCHOOL on their success in Italy and on the recognition of their home city.

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Lee Kopp
Director, Marketing & Publicity
Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley
40 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113
(408) 288-2820 x210 office
lkopp@balletsanjose.org
(408) 839-2379 cell