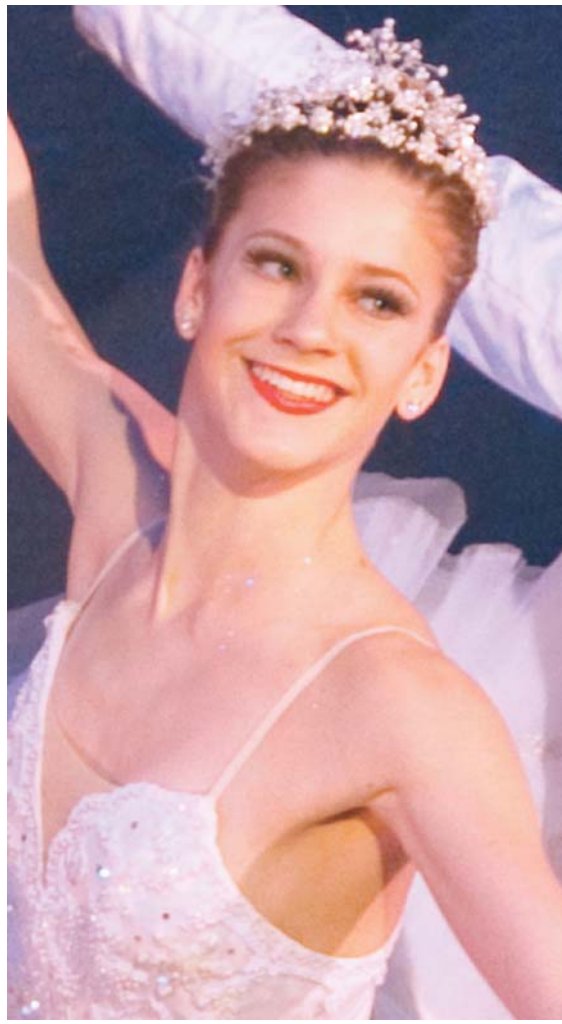


PEOPLE



Lauren Gallisa combines strength, beauty, and a little magic in her portrayal of the Fairy Godmother in CBT's 2010 production of Cinderella.



Lauren Gallisa exudes grace and confidence as she dances the role of Snow Queen in CBT's 2009 production of The Nutcracker.

Reaching High

Lauren Gallisa of Herndon's Classical Ballet Theatre looks forward to new big roles.

Lauren Gallisa, a 16-year-old honor student at the Potomac Falls High School, has chosen to pursue excellence in one of the most difficult of all performing arts - classical ballet. She has supportive parents, an active younger sister, and more extended family members, including Marley the Portuguese water dog and Annie the 17-year-old cat. What sets her apart is her ability to work nearly a lifetime of long, strenuous hours towards her goal of becoming a professional ballerina.

"I know ballet is the most difficult of the dance art forms, but I do like to challenge myself," Lauren says.

She began her dancing career at age 6, when she remembers looking forward to her biweekly class, being inspired by the music, and watching the older dancers train.

Today, Lauren is as an accomplished dancer.

During the summer of 2008, the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School invited her to participate in its five-

week intensive summer program. During the summers of 2009 and 2010, the Miami City Ballet School invited her to participate in its five-week summer intensive program as well. Lauren enjoyed her training with professional dancers and a variety of teachers explaining different approaches to technique.

She works with the faculty of the Classical Ballet Theatre (CBT) of Herndon, a not-for-profit performing arts organization that provides education, performance, and outreach opportunities in the art of classical ballet to Northern Virginia and the surrounding communities. Lauren especially appreciates her classes with CBT Executive Director Cynthia Donavin and Artistic Director Alisher Saburov, both of whom have extensive ballet experience and bring unique gifts to the classroom.

She works up to 20 hours per week with CBT. She currently dances with the Senior Company and trains in the Pre-Professional program, designed for dancers

who want to pursue professional careers after high school. This takes significant time management, and Lauren said, "Sometimes I feel like I'm going to explode!"

Her ballet training is right after school. The remainder of the day is dedicated to her academic studies. She still has some time to fit in an occasional high school football game. Lauren will be highlighted as the Sugar Plum Fairy in CBT's Nov. 27t-28 production of The Nutcracker at the Ernst Community Cultural Center Theatre, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus. She played the Snow Queen role in CBT's 2009 Nutcracker production.

Lauren hopes to dance well beyond high school graduation, so she continues to push herself through challenging instruction, coaching, and performances.

For more information about Classical Ballet Theatre, go to <http://www.cbtnva.org>.

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