

the

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Serving the North Shore of Eastern Brookhaven Town

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Weekend *Plus*

Dancing the weekend away

Locals to participate in L.I. Ballet Competition

This weekend the first Long Island dance competition collaboratively produced by four major local ballet studios premieres at Maguire Theater at SUNY/Old Westbury. American Studio of Performing Arts, Huntington Ballet Academy, Lumiere Ballet and Seiskaya Ballet are the founding members of the new nonprofit organization Long Island Ballet Competition, and 54 competitors from Brooklyn to the Town of Brookhaven will perform this Saturday and Sunday. Local participants include Mount Sinai High School students Danielle Troyano and Jacqueline Iannone.

by
**Rebecca
Packard**

"The mission of the Long Island Ballet Competition is to promote and encourage a high standard of excellence in classical ballet, educate and challenge the aspiring dancer and expand the audience for ballet on Long Island," according to the LIBC Web site.

"Long Island has quality ballet training," said Marnie Katzman, a member of LIBC's executive board and administrative committee. Ms. Katzman, who is a former dancer and works for Long Island Arts Council at Freeport, said that when she first heard about the collaborative competition idea, she was excited by the notion of raising people's awareness of high-quality dancing and providing educational opportunities for local dance students, even though she isn't part of a dance studio.

The first comparable Long Island ballet showcase and competition was produced by Saraband Ltd. In the late 1980s and early '90s. Saraband inspired two "Long Island-centric" competitions in 2006 and then this weekend's event, according to LIBC's site.



THE LONG ISLAND BALLET COMPETITION

May 3 & May 4 | Maguire Theater at SUNY/Old Westbury

General admission weekend passes: \$25;
\$15 for seniors and children under 18. Sunday-only ticket are \$15.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.liballetcompetition.com

"We decided it would be advantageous to combine our efforts," said Ms. Katzman. "Why not build one ballet competition that would grow over the years ... Instead of several small ones?"

The event involves dance competitions in three divisions: Junior (ages 9-11), Senior (12-14), and Pre-Professional (15-18). Female and male dancers will also be judged separately. Younger students will dance combinations that involve particular dance techniques, older students will dance classical "variations," parts of well-known roles. Pre-Professional students will also perform a contemporary selection. There will be three winners in each female age category with a cash or cash-equivalent first prize worth \$250, a second prize of \$150, and a third prize of \$100. Prizes for male students are yet to be determined.

There will also be a free pointe shoe seminar and open master class with Mary Carpenter for \$20. Ms. Carpenter has been in the Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center, a soloist in companies such as Maryland Ballet, and is a faculty member of Steps on Broadway, Barnard College and The New School.

Ms. Katzman said LIBC made an effort to pick professional, impartial judges: John Printz, a principal dancer at American Ballet Theater and now teaches in the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College; and Lupe Serrano, who danced in American Ballet Theatre for 20 years and now teaches Metropolitan Opera dancers and at A.B.T.'s Studio Company.

Danielle Troyano, pictured, and Jacqueline Iannone of Mount Sinai will compete in the Long Island Ballet Competition this weekend.

Sun photo courtesy of Seiskaya Ballet