

# An Extraordinary Experience For Logrea Dance Academy Students

*To watch us dance is to hear our hearts speak.*

*~Hopi Indian Saying~*

What is it they say about opportunity? For ten talented Logrea Dance Academy students opportunity came in the form of Oberlin Dance Collective of California (ODC San Francisco) and having been chosen to dance with this celebrated company at SUNY Purchase in “The Velveteen Rabbit.”

Ranging in age from nine to twelve, Olivia Chandler, Sarah Colgan, Clare Hammonds, Lara Kennedy, Julianna Marchant, Taylor Massa, Lea Onayan, Molly Powers, Elyse Samojedny and Erina Tanaka rehearse under the expert and watchful eye of Jacki Theon, one of Logrea Dance Academy’s exceptional faculty members.

These young students, who have trained together for a number of years at LDA, are remarkable to watch and their jubilant camaraderie is truly an inspiration. The Academy’s strong focus on classical ballet, as well as training in Jazz, Modern and Tap helped to form the well-equipped young dancers, giving them the



Molly Powers, Lea Onayan and Taylor Massa (on right) Work with rehearsal props in the Logrea Dance Academy Studio

“dance vocabulary” to swiftly learn the choreographic style required for this production. Ms. Thoen is meticulously working with the young dancers helping them master the unique choreographic style of ODC’s Artistic Director, KT Nelson.

Most of these children are junior members of Westchester Ballet Company and as such have taken part in that Company’s beautiful and popular annual holiday production of “The

Nutcracker” at the Westchester County Center. As a result, they are not unfamiliar with performing on stage. Something they are all eagerly looking forward to with this fantastic production of “The Velveteen Rabbit.”



Instructor Jacqueline Thoen adjusts Lea’s placement in a recent rehearsal. [Pictured left to right: Clare Hammonds , Erina Tanaka, Olivia Chandler, Jacki Thoen, Lea Onayan]

When asked, these youthful dancers respond enthusiastically about dreams to make dancing a career when they grow up. Nine-year-old Molly Powers, the youngest student performing with ODC San Francisco said, “I am really excited and so happy to be doing this! The rehearsals are lots of fun and I’m learning all kinds of new things too! I can’t wait to see the costumes and the ODC dancers. ” As

for the oldest member to perform, twelve-year-old Taylor Massa conveys her love of ballet and the thrill of having this unique opportunity, “It is amazing to have this special chance. It was such an incredible surprise!” Taylor says with a vibrant smile, “I hope that one day, if I work really hard, I will dance with a professional company and be a prima ballerina!”



Wearing pads to protect their knees as they rehearse the precise movements in KT Nelson’s choreography. [pictured left to right: Erina Tanaka, Julianna Marchant, Olivia Chandler, Molly Powers and Lea Onayan]

These LDA students and friends in dance will take their dreams to the stage at the SUNY Purchase Concert Hall on Sunday, April 27 at 3:00 pm and again as part of the Arts in Education program on Monday, April 28 at 10:30 am.



The young dancers take a break as they watch their friends learn the choreography [left to right: Molly Powers, Lara Kennedy, Clare Hammonds, Elyse Samojedny & Sarah Colgan

“The Velveteen Rabbit” is a tale of love, loyalty, the beauty and wisdom connected with growing old, and life’s transitions; all brought to magnificent life with music composed by Benjamin Britten, ODC San Francisco and ten little dancers. Recommended for all ages!