



News

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Go Forth and Dance Salsa at Babalu

Dance New Yorkers do not stay holed up in the studio taking lessons and never dancing anywhere else. They go forth and spread the gospel, whether it is to competitions (see the article later in this issue) or to night clubs in New York City. Dance New Yorkers also go out of their way to help out when asked. Willy Villegas, who teaches Cuban Salsa at Dance New York, recently stepped in to teach the Friday night lesson at Babalu, a classy night club and restaurant. The regular instructor had a conflict, so Willy offered to fill in that night.

Willy's lesson was both precise and fast paced – he made sure the beginner participants got a proper start, and there was also something

interesting for people who had been dancing for years. If you really want to learn how to shake your topline *, go to Willy's Wednesday 7 PM Cuban Salsa class at Dance New York.

Willy is from Cuba, bringing its authentic flavor and island energy to the Isle of Manhattan.

Babalu is located at 327 West 44th Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues. Call (212) 262-1111 for dinner reservations or to ask about times or the live band that may be playing there on a given night.

The food at Babalu, by the way, was superb. Interesting and tasty round bread balls were served with what tasted sort of like hummus. The tuna on a bed of quinoa was cooked with carefully calibrated spicing. The flavor

slowly built in your mouth from the beginning of the plate to the end, rather like a well constructed song. The wine served with dinner was very smooth. The band was lively, and the excellent wood floor filled with dancers with a range of ability.



* I realize shaking your topline is heresy to those of us who are strictly ballroom, but even Aleksandra Gisher, one of Dance New York's phenomenal International style teachers, has been known to get down when the spirit moves her, so it may be time to move beyond your preconceptions, flaunt your vulnerability as a strength, and show you can master any style to which you set your mind.

Competition Report

There has been a lot of competition activity since the last issue of Dance New York News, so we thought we would bring you up to date.

American Star Ball

May 24-27, 2001

There are so many Dance New Yorkers competing, it is easy to overlook people, despite our best intentions not to. Steven Dougherty competed pro-am with three of his students at the recent American Star Ball: Sarah Lam, Inona Kelly and Francine Stein. For everyone else who competed here, see DNY News V1N5.

Colorado Star Ball

June 22-24, 2001

Robert Abrams and Anya traveled to Denver to compete in their first Pro-Am Rhythm competition. Their plane was delayed by five hours due to a vicious hail storm in Denver that had damaged dozens of planes earlier that day and a mechanic who accidentally caused an emergency exit chute to deploy as people were first boarding the plane. Unlike weaker passengers who went home, they persevered, biding their time by studying the video of their dance routines saved on Robert's Mac laptop. The next day they competed despite the handicaps of lack of sleep, jet lag, and a mile's change in altitude, and managed a decent showing. Robert's one year old nephew, Connor, was an enthusiastic spectator. Connor seemed to be particularly taken with the Paso Doble, so if anyone is looking for an amateur partner...

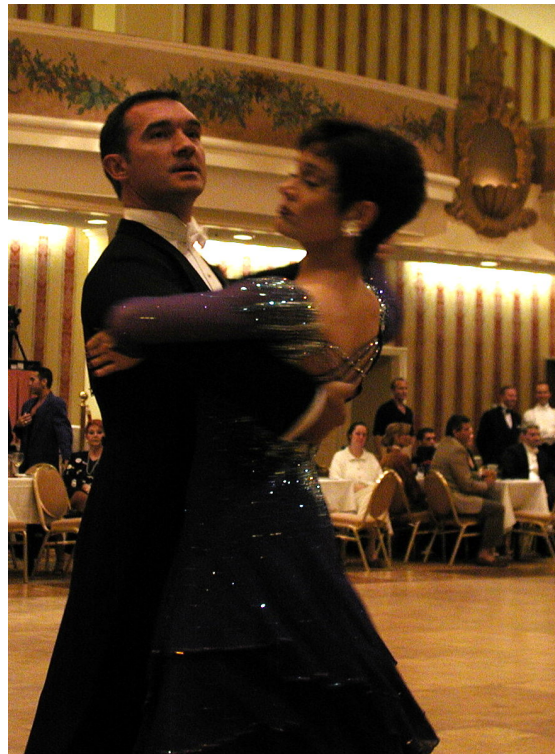
The Colorado Star Ball was a very well organized competition. The heat sheets were available on the web a

week in advance showing specific times for each event. For that alone the organizers, Richard and Jennifer Booth, deserve a gold star. The Colorado Star Ball is a comp I would recommend considering next year, although I also suggest going a day early to give yourself time to adjust to the altitude.

Sapphire Ball

June 29-July 2, 2001

Dance New York's own Paul Holmes was one of the organizers for this comp, which took place at the elegant Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco atop Nob Hill. Dance New York professionals competing included Martin Lamb and Anya. Dance New York amateurs competing included Robert Abrams, Christopher Allen, Becky Yeaman, and Sherry Courtney.



Martin Lamb and Becky Yeaman



Martin Lamb and Becky Yeamans receive first place in the Sapphire Ball's Pro-Am International Standard Open Scholarship event from Paul Holmes.

Eddie Simon was a judge, and also danced in the big show with Michelle Officer. Becky Yeamans and Martin Lamb won the Pro-Am International Standard Open Scholarship event. This event requires a couple to dance Waltz, Tango, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot, and Quickstep.

Robert Abrams went straight from Colorado to San Francisco and spent the week training with Roberta Sun, the teacher from San Jose who

originally recommended that he dance with Michelle Officer (see Dance New York News V1N1). In a sign of just how well Michelle has trained him, in only nine hours of practice, Robert and Roberta managed to go from having never danced together to holding their own in four dances. Maybe every dance teacher should have a designated second teacher with whom they should insist their students dance? It forced me to actually lead.

Manhattan Dance Sport Championships

July 5-9, 2001

Dance New York professionals competing included Amy Reichert, Anya, Clive Phillips, David Endicott, Dimitrios Damalas, Fernando Cox, Jose Decamps, Lucas Jaime, Martin Lamb, Michelle Officer, Oscar Burgos, Paul Holmes, Robert Frank, and Steven Dougherty. Students included Becky Yeamans, Chris Nunes, Christopher Allen, Erika Nii, Geri-Ann Israel, Katherine Lefferts, Liane Onish, Linda Katz, Minako Hojo, Pat

Franzino, Philippa Zelman, Robert Abrams, Sarah Lam, Vernon Duckett, and Wendy Sherman.

Sarah Lam, dancing with Steven Dougherty, made the finals of the Pro-Am International Standard Scholarship event. Inona Kelly, also dancing with Steven, made the finals of the American Smooth Scholarship. Erika Nii won the American Smooth Closed Championship. Minako Hojo made the finals of the International Standard Scholarship. Erika and Minako were both dancing with Steven.

Katherine Lefferts, dancing with Oscar Burgos, made the finals of the Open International Latin Scholarship, and came in 2nd place in the Closed International Latin Championship. Congratulations!



The next showcase is September 28.

Dance New York Showcases are a great way to see your fellow students and teachers perform.

Special Saturday Parties:

8:30pm to 12:30am

(includes professional performances)

Halloween Costume Party on Oct. 27

Very Important: If you have competed in a recent event, and you want to be assured of being mentioned in Dance New York News, you must contact the editor with names of competitors, status (professional or amateur competitor, judge, etc.), name and date of the event, and hopefully, how you did well in your event. If you want to write at length about your experience, so much the better. Email DNYnews@exploredance.com, or leave a message at the front desk. Unfortunately, comp programs can be inconsistent in how they list people, and especially since Dance New York is an independent studio full of many independent people, you may need to wave a flag to get noticed. We can help make you a star on the flag, but you may need to grab the pole first. And if you have survived that mixed metaphor, you can probably make it anywhere.



Paul Holmes and Wendy Sherman



Minako Hojo and Steven Dougherty



David Endicott and Amy Reichert

Special charity performance

A Celestial Evening

Dance New York's own **Amy Reichert** and **David Endicott** will perform at the Children's Aid Society Fall Gala on September 15, 2001 at the W Hotel.

The **Children's Aid Society (CAS)** has been serving New York City's children and families since 1853. The event supports CAS' Neighborhood Youth Employment Program.

Talia Castro-Pozo and **Jules Helm** will also perform at this black tie event - which runs from 9 PM to 1 AM. There will be plenty of dancing, an open bar, a silent auction, and much more.

The event should be a blast. Tickets are \$125 per person. Call (917) 286-1530 for tickets, or go to www.childrensaidsociety.org/cas/event.html.

