

Grishko Rising Star Hannah Lipman

Hannah Lipman has been in love with ballet since babyhood, starting lessons and attending performances, both before age three. "My husband covers for the physician at New York City Ballet and gets free tickets," says Hannah's mother, Michele Geminder. "It was really inspirational for her. At first she fell asleep, and then she fell in love."

Hannah, now age 14, has studied at the [School at Steps](#) from the beginning, and joined the pre-professional program at age eight. Steps, around the corner from Hannah's home, "has been a wonderful environment," says Michele. "Students are very supportive of one another and Hannah gets wonderful attention from her teachers."



"I have what I have as a dancer because of Steps," Hannah confirms. "Each teacher has added something every year to help me advance."

A year after Hannah started pointe, teacher Tomiko Magario sent her to Judy Weiss for a fitting in Grishko pointe shoes. "My other shoes weren't fitting correctly," Hannah recalls. "I was sinking into them and she said Grishko would help."

Since then, "she won't be fitted by anybody but Judy," Michele says. In addition to appreciating Judy's fitting prowess, Hannah has found that Grishko, as predicted by her teacher, is her shoe of choice. "I have high arches and tend to sink, but Grishko keeps me really lifted," she says.

She has worn Fouetté, Ulanova and Maya and is currently trying Nova. "The three-quarter shank is perfect for my foot," she says.

On pointe five days per week, Hannah makes her shoes last about a month and a half by alternating pairs. "It really helps," she says.

Hannah is currently in Steps' advanced level, where she is the youngest dancer; most others are 16 to 18. She is excited to be studying with Leslie Browne this year. "She focuses a lot on *port de bras* and placement, how to hold yourself and have a nice presence on stage, which is really important," she says. "I like how she corrects - it's very clear, it makes sense and you can apply the corrections easily," adding that she also enjoys Browne's sense of humor.

After three summers at [Ballet Academy East](#), Hannah spent five weeks last summer at [The Gelsey Kirkland Academy](#). "It was really fantastic," she says of GKA. She loves learning new variations and is especially excited about partnering, which she began over the summer and is continuing at Steps. "She received amazing comments at the intensive," Michele adds.



At Steps, she dances about three hours per day, seven days a week (including private lessons with Browne on Sundays). Her ballet schedule includes classes in technique, *pas de deux*, pointe and variations. She also enjoys the theater dance and modern classes that are part of the pre-professional program.

"Hannah works hard in every class," Michele says. "She has passion and an incredibly strong work ethic. That kind of drive and dedication - I'm constantly in awe of it."

Photographs courtesy of Michele Geminder and Eduardo Patino. Studio photography at GKA by Michele Geminder. Performance photo (West Side Story's "The Mambo," Steps Showcase 2011) by [Eduardo Patino](#).

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