

### Lauren's Essay

This picture was taken at a *That's Entertainment* dance competition on the 23rd of March in 2014. I was performing my pointe solo for the first time and the photo captured me right after the music started. I had never done a solo number for any style of dance, let alone pointe, which is quite complicated, so I was very nervous. I was dancing to a song titled "Shostakovich Waltz" and it was my moment. All eyes were on me as I stepped onto the stage and pivoted into my beginning pose. I was trembling out of fear and excitement. What if I messed up? My parents and my friends were there, other dancers were watching, and I was going to be judged. I wished to be anywhere but where I was. Then the music started. I heard the first few notes and then almost of their own accord my feet and arms started moving. I felt myself smile as I stood poised on my toes ready to begin my routine. This moment is important to me because it felt right. I was not Lauren Schwartzbard anymore but a dancer ready to spread her love of dancing to those watching. I knew in that second that the next few minutes would be incredible and I could not wait to start. It is significant because looking back I wish I could live forever in this moment because all my months of practicing were paying off. I have done many things in my 14 years that I wish I could relive, but this one I would not mind reliving over and over. I do not always feel like I am worth a lot, but on that day, in that one moment, I felt confident, beautiful, and ready for the world. To me a moment like that is worth preserving, as I may not have many more like it. I ended up getting first place in my division and I keep a plaque on my bedroom wall to remind myself of my routine and especially this moment.