

### **2003: Dear Elizabeth**

During “reverence” on Thursday’s class, I stood near you and “felt” that your body language was saying something more to me alone. It isn’t common for anyone [not even dancers] to speak in words about what they’re “hearing” through body language. But at the risk of being wrong or even presumed crazy, I wish to do so with you now.

As you brought your arms into fifth en haut I felt you were saying, “Keep your shoulders down. You’re going to need a strong back to carry you through this journey. And keep your arms above your head to God. Reach up for His support and guidance.”

Whether or not I “heard” correctly, I’d like you to know that I think the Academy of Ballet is a most spiritual place – as I said to you when we spoke during the break. The Academy is one of the great synagogues of my life, a very precious place for me to pray. And you, you are a wise “rabbi” who expresses the depth of your understanding and compassion so effectively. I know that with your experience in Israel, you understand my effort to convey my respect in choosing that word to describe you. It might sound funny if you tell your family or friends that one of your dance pupils called you his rabbi, but I can find no more fitting word to use.