

## In DS e-news:

Summer is officially here. Read our tips on fun summer styles and how to beat summer skin problems. We've also highlighted a terrific new musical that brings kids to the professional stage and can't-miss auditions. Speaking of hot, check out the blog from January 2007 cover subjects Dana Tai Soon Burgess & Co's trip to the Middle East! Happy dancing!

## Announcing the Cover Model Search 2007 Finalists!

We're happy to announce that you can now vote online at [dancespirit.com/vote](http://dancespirit.com/vote) for who should win this year's Cover Model Search! Our finalists--Maci Cameron, Sara Michelle Murawski and Brooke Shepherd--all possess a unique talent and passion for dance! Log-on today to watch each finalist's variation and a behind-the-scenes video from our photo shoot in NYC. To read more about the finalists, check out the July/August issue of *Dance Spirit*!

## Count to Ten

By Tamara Johnson

The newest show at Manhattan's 14th St Theater, *Count to Ten*, brings an ensemble of young talent to the professional Off-Broadway stage. Aside from two adults, the characters are all kids at a dance camp, portrayed by young dancer/actors between the ages of 10 and 18. When a frustrated and bitter Broadway producer shows up at their workshop with an incomplete new musical, the campers and their teacher inspire him and come into their own as confident performers in the process.

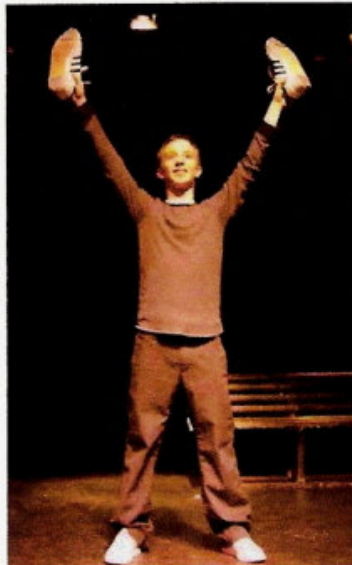
But there is nothing amateur about this show. "The kids are phenomenal!" says producer Justin Boccitto (who also stars in the show as the producer). "They're all completely professional with an outstanding work ethic. You can see from their commitment this is what they want." Regarding the young cast, Brian Merker, who plays the lead teen, comments, "It's actually more comfortable and more fun to work with younger people. We can all relate because we're all going through the same things." Merker, 18, will be attending NYU to study business this fall, but plans to continue pursuing musical theater. He describes *Count to Ten* as having "tons of potential. It's rare for Broadway shows to feature mainly kids, despite being very kid-oriented, so this is very exciting."

The musical is choreographed, directed and co-written by Broadway veteran Michael Blevins, best known as Mark from the film *A Chorus Line*. Blevins is also a highly sought-after tap teacher! His students have included Savion Glover and Bob Fosse's grandson! *Count to Ten* was originally created for a workshop Blevins and Boccitto directed in January for young tappers in NYC.

The workshop ended up serving as an audition, with the cast for the Union Square run culled entirely from that experience. Boccitto explains, "We were adamant that the kids could seriously tap and pick up choreography quickly. All our dancers *know* this show and it's just amazing what they've been able to learn."

*Count to Ten* will run June 22-July 1. Tix are available at [grouptheatretoo.org](http://grouptheatretoo.org) or by calling 212.352.3101.

Pictured above: Brian Merker performs in *Count to Ten*.



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