

Demetia Hopkins' Doing What She Loves

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By Marvin Vásquez

Growing up, she saw Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. She never forgot. She kept those memories within. Now, she's a part of this prestigious ballet company.

That's the humbling life story of Demetia Hopkins, a ballet dancer for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater – an entity that's scheduled to perform April 17-21 at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles.

All the performances will feature the 1960 piece "Revelations," among many others like "Another Night" by rising young choreographer Kyle Abraham, Ohad Naharin's inventive "Minus 16" and a new production of Ronald K. Brown's "Grace."



During a phone interview, the Virginia-native talked about her dream becoming a reality, the upcoming shows in L.A. and growing as an artist in her profession.

Campus Circle: You saw Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater perform growing up. Now you're part of it. How does that feel? Is it a dream come true?

Demetia Hopkins: It definitely is. Even the thought of it still overwhelms me sometimes. One of the people I love most before Ailey was Renee Robinson. When I got into this company, Renee Robinson was still here. I got to perform 'Revelations' with her. Some of my best memories from the beginning were from being on stage with Renee, and watching her dance while I'm dancing and her doing her thing. She would sing on stage and it was the most beautiful thing. Her dancing her heart out there, it's one of the best memories.

CC: Why should people go watch Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater?

DH: I think Ailey is always an incredible company to go see because the repertoire is so relatable. Whether we come out with three different programs, you're going to find something that catches you – and everything is so versatile. The amount of work that we do is great. We go from a classical work, and then you can have something that's very down and urban 10 minutes after that. So it's just incredible to see the journey we go through from piece to piece. I think anyone would just love to see the show.

CC: In this profession, how is it that one grows professionally?

DH: I think you constantly have to keep pushing yourself, and also find inspiration from other dancers by watching other dancers and hearing what other dancers have to say to you about themselves and their work. I think it's very important because a lot of people stay in this company for a very long time. We're very close to one another and especially the senior members are always passing down their wisdom because they're done so much and have seen so many dancers pass through the company. That's one of the best ways that we are growing, specially the younger members. We feel that we have learned a lot.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performs April 17-21 at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. For more information, [click here](#).