

DETAILS

How I Got My Body: Alvin Ailey Dancer Glenn Allen Sims Doesn't Eat Dinner but Will Finish an Entire Pint of Ice Cream

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Today Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater kicks off its 43rd consecutive season with five weeks of performances at New York City Center before embarking on nationwide and international tours. The company's star, 39-year-old Glenn Allen Sims, dances seven and a half hours a day to prepare, but it takes more than discipline in the studio to maintain his chiseled physique.

"Getting to be almost 40, when things start to fall different ways, I've become more worried about my abdominals. I'm more cognizant of my torso. I want to be portrayed as a man on stage, not some skinny little guy dancer. I barely touch my legs in the gym because of the nature of using my lower half for dance. Instead, when I have a break between rehearsals, I run to the Equinox at Columbus Circle for an hour and a half and do an upper-body workout to get that width; there's a certain stature a man should have.

"I work my lats, chest, and arms by doing the breaststroke in the pool and letting my legs drag behind me. I run in the pool, too, and go to Equinox's Aqua Bootcamp, even though people think that aqua aerobics is for old ladies. My wife [fellow Ailey dancer Linda Celeste Sims] takes it, and I remember the first time I went: Here I come with all my gear on, my webbed gloves, and the older ladies were like, 'Ugh, what is he doing here?' And I thought, All right, it's on. But the little old ladies were better—they do it every day.



"I've become a huge rower. When I'm stressed, I get on the Concept Rower and let everything go. Sometimes in life, you need that one-on-one, just you and the machine. Working out is not only a release of tension from being in the dance studio, but it's a way to meditate on my own body. Injuries happen because of lack of awareness. In 17 years with the company, I've been injury-free. I see the company physical therapist every single day just to maintain. I'm that guy who doesn't stretch. Physical therapy, for me, is about realigning and stretching my muscles because I can't do it myself. I mean, I can, but it's much better when someone else manipulates you.



"Every Monday I go to Peter Vaillancourt for a massage. It's more trigger-point pressure than slathering oil on. And when my legs start to look short and bulky, I know it's time to roll out [with my foam roller]. I do it if I'm not being used during rehearsal and then again when I get home. Other than that, at night, I just lay. Being really physical people, in our downtime, Linda and I just want to watch TV and decompress, just completely veg out.

"I don't technically eat dinner. I follow the principles of food combining, and with that you should not eat after 8:00 P.M. Food combining is really beneficial because it helps how your body breaks down food so you can use it for energy and digestion. My lunch is usually protein in a salad, like steak and kale, so I feel satisfied but still light. Breakfast is generally oatmeal with goji berries and

my Nespresso, of course. Goji is a red berry with antiaging properties—in this business, you don't want to look your age. My vitamins are all oil-based so that my skin is well-oiled from the inside out: vitamin E for soreness, acetyl L-carnitine as an amino acid, a men's multivitamin for energy and heart health, vitamin D because we're always indoors, and vitamin C because we travel a lot. I have not had the flu. During the [performance] season, I take two ounces of wheatgrass daily—it boosts your immune system.



"When Linda and I do cook dinner on days off—we cook at home all the time and on the road, too; we carry pots and sauté pans and a hot plate—I'm huge on trying different spices. They say that spices help your metabolism, and I've noticed over the past couple years that mine has become faster. But my go-to if we're at home in New Rochelle and I haven't eaten is Talenti banana chocolate swirl gelato. That's where my weakness really lies. I'm not eating just a couple of spoonfuls—I'm finishing the entire pint. I don't count calories, but I know that's too many, so the next day I have to work harder. I'll be that one person at the gym on the elliptical watching *Law & Order: SUV* for an hour, for the whole episode."



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